

Three Institutions Project

Arena Stage
Corcoran Gallery of Art
Folger Shakespeare Library

1980

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Proposal

Arena Stage
Corcoran Gallery of Art
Folger Shakespeare Library

A PROPOSAL FOR PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE SUPPORT

Introduction: Summary Statement

Washington is a unique American city. It is the home of 700,000 citizens and the core of a greater Metropolitan community of three million. A center of international diplomacy and tourism, it attracts 17 million visitors each year. As such, its successes and failures are important to the nation as a whole.

The principle of federal support for activities which enhance the stature and beauty of Washington is well established. The Smithsonian Institution, the Library of

Congress, the National Zoo and the national monuments are supported almost entirely by federal appropriations. Many cultural activities in the capital are quasi-public and receive support through the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior. Still other activities are supported through the federal payment to the District of Columbia. The Report of the Commission on Federal Payment, issued in May of 1976 (House Report No. 94-1095), recognized that federal support is appropriate for activities which "result from [Washington's] status as the nation's capital." It further recognizes that such support is "essential and equitable in order to develop the city as a desirable national capital," and that the Congress has an "obligation to the District to maintain a beautiful city."

The Arena Stage, the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Folger Shakespeare Library are private cultural institutions. Together they add more than \$9 million annually to the economy of the Washington metropolitan area but they are financed by gifts, grants and earned income rather than annual federal appropriations. Because they are located in the District of Columbia, they share the following characteristics:

- (1) They perform cultural functions of national and international significance on behalf of the American people.

(2) They are housed in architecturally significant buildings which are located adjacent to important federal enclaves. These buildings must be maintained at exceptionally high standards, at very considerable cost, because of their importance to the areas surrounding them.

(3) They are at a severe competitive disadvantage in relation to federally-supported institutions because of the federal policy of both providing support to these institutions and at the same time encouraging them to seek extensive private support.

Profiles of the Institutions and Their Contributions
to the Cultural Life of the Nation's Capital

Arena Stage, one of the country's foremost professional resident theaters, has a worldwide reputation for dramatic excellence. Its rich and extensive repertory of plays ranges from great classics to contemporary American dramas which explore our social customs and values. More than a quarter million people, including area residents, tourists from all parts of the country, visitors from abroad, and members of Congress and the diplomatic community, attended Arena performances during 1978-79.

In 1973, the State Department chose Arena Stage as the first resident company to tour the Soviet Union under the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Cultural Exchange Program. It has also been invited to represent the United States at several European festivals. In 1980 Arena became the first American company to participate in the Hong Kong Arts Festival. A Tony was awarded to Arena Stage in 1976 in recognition of its contributions to the American theater scene over the previous quarter century. Long the pivotal force behind the Regional Theater Movement, it was the first theater outside of New York City to receive this award.

Arena Stage also offers educational programs, such as its Living Stage, aimed primarily at young people and handicapped children, which utilizes special improvisational techniques to stimulate the young imagination and increase appreciation of the arts.

The Arena Stage building is a handsome three-theater complex designed by noted Chicago architect, Harry Weese. Prominently situated in the Southwest redevelopment area, it has been cited as an outstanding example of contemporary theater architecture, and is, in the words of Clive Barnes (formerly New York Times and currently New York Post drama critic), "one of the capital's major cultural assets."

The Corcoran Gallery of Art is located one block from the White House in a 19th century Beaux Arts style building once described by Frank Lloyd Wright as Washington's most beautiful building. Founded in 1869 by W. W. Corcoran "to promote and encourage the American genius," it has carried on this mandate for 111 years, making it the oldest art gallery in the capital and the third oldest in the nation. It houses one of the finest collections of 18th and 19th century American art in the world. Colonial and revolutionary portraits, genre scenes of early American life, landscapes of America from Niagara Falls in the East to the vast Rockies of the West, views of immigration and Indian life, labor union scenes and pictures of Americans at leisure -- all create a visual panorama of the American past. Arranged chronologically, the Corcoran's collection celebrates both America's birth and its development in paintings by and of Americans. Its Biennial exhibition of contemporary American painting, held without interruption since 1907, "in recognition of the just claim of American art to rank with the best art in the world," brings the work of the nation's outstanding contemporary artists to the capital. Responsive to current art developments, the Corcoran also maintains a continuing program of exhibitions and acquisitions. Thus the Corcoran performs an educational function by linking

America's art of the past to current movements in art and culture. Its collections and exhibitions form a continuing time-line of American tastes, history and culture. In addition, the Corcoran is the only museum which regularly shows art of the Washington region and provides many studio art courses for the local community. It is also active in the diplomatic community through its sponsorship of exhibits of important international artists who have had an impact on American art.

This year the Corcoran will welcome 600,000 visitors. Thousands of sightseers from tours of the neighboring White House stop to visit the Corcoran. Students from all nearby school districts make the Corcoran a regular part of their Washington tours. Over 20,000 children receive instruction from the Corcoran's department of education each year which cooperates closely with local school districts through its outreach program in American art. As well, more than 1,200 adults are enrolled in drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture classes. Of this number, 240 are currently working toward the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree which the Corcoran offers.

In addition to the visual arts, the Corcoran presents a full range of music and dance programs, from the avant garde

of jazz and contemporary music to the classical performances of the Tokyo String Quartet and the National Symphony String Quartet (both playing on Amati and Stradivari instruments which belong to the Corcoran). Lectures on art and American culture, open to the public without charge, are regularly offered.

The Folger Shakespeare Library is located two blocks from the Capitol on Capitol Hill. A gift of Henry Clay Folger "to all Americans," the Library is an internationally recognized center for the study of Shakespeare and the Renaissance. Its building, which features a monumental classical exterior and Tudor interiors, was designed by Paul Cret, who also designed the Pan American Union and the Old Federal Reserve building. Housing 200,000 modern books and one of the world's finest collections of rare books and manuscripts, including 79 of the existing 240 First Folios of Shakespeare's plays, the Folger is an essential resource to scholars and educators for the study of literature, drama, philosophy, music, geography and science of the English and the Continental Renaissance. It is especially strong in materials reflecting the heritage -- political, religious and artistic -- of the English-speaking peoples.

The Folger also offers a broad range of activities for the general public. In 1976, 80,000 tourists and school groups

passed through the Great Exhibition Hall and another 80,000 attended the Folger's plays, concerts, lectures and poetry readings. Since 1979 the Folger has served a national audience through its travelling exhibition, Shakespeare: The Globe and the World. Opened in San Francisco, the exhibition's itinerary during the next two-and-one-half years includes Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Dallas, Atlanta, New York and Los Angeles. Perhaps as many as one million visitors will see the exhibition before it returns to the Folger in 1982.

As Washington's only permanent Shakespearean theater, the Folger Theater Group has developed a fresh and characteristically American approach to producing the Shakespearean repertory. It also presents premieres of contemporary works such as Creeps, The Fool, the American premiere of Whose Life Is It Anyway? and Charlie and Algernon (which will open on Broadway in fall, 1980). Newsweek critic Jack Kroll labeled the Folger Theater Group "...the best kind of theatrical news."

The Folger's Division of Public and Museum Programs supervises lectures, concerts and readings by poets as varied as James Dickey and Allen Ginsberg. Its Consort, an early music group, has received national recognition and during 1979-80 was regularly broadcast on thirty fine music stations throughout the country. The Library's Academic Programs Division

sponsors an Institute of Renaissance and Eighteenth Century Studies in cooperation with eighteen universities ranging from Princeton in the north to Chapel Hill in the south. It also publishes a scholarly journal with an international circulation, The Shakespeare Quarterly.

Special Problems of Private Institutions in Washington

These three private institutions -- Arena Stage, the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Folger Library -- have served the nation's capital for an aggregate of 200 years. They have tried to maintain their physical plants in a manner appropriate to the national capital and to the prominent sites which they occupy. While they have exerted every effort to sustain their buildings and their programs, they suffer from the effects of deferred maintenance and inadequate plant budgets. The Folger has mounted a \$7.5 million program of renovation and upgrading of its facility based almost entirely on private support. The campaign has been -- and continues to be -- a heavy strain on its staff and resources. The

Corcoran still faces such a campaign and suffers at present from poor conservation conditions which threaten a priceless collection.

Climate control, security, and adequate storage are fundamental to conserving the collections of the Corcoran and the Folger for future generations and to sheltering them in such a way that they will be accessible to the students, teachers, scholars and others for whom they are an essential resource.

Support for the protection and maintenance of the physical plants of most private institutions throughout the country typically comes from endowment, institutionally-generated income, gifts, and city and state funding. The Corcoran and the Folger both have endowments; Arena Stage is not endowed. Ticket sales income and museum shop sales are also used to offset maintenance costs. None of the three institutions can draw on city or state support because of the special nature of the District of Columbia.

Gifts and grants are therefore crucially important to all three institutions and they employ development offices to seek funds. Typically, however, gifts and grants are most often earmarked for specific, imposing programs and tend to raise rather than lower maintenance and security costs by

increasing use of the institution's plant and demands on its maintenance and security staff. Thus, the increasing number of visitors, attacted by high quality exhibitions, performances and educational programs, create funding obligations which are increasingly difficult to meet.

The Federal/State Parallel

In cities other than Washington, municipal and state funds are a major source of support for private cultural institutions: For example:

<u>Institution</u>	<u>State/Local Funding</u>
Baltimore Museum of Art	\$1,348,409
Brooklyn Museum	2,400,000
Philadelphia Museum of Art	2,791,948
Guthrie Theatre (Minneapolis)	177,000
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts	2,500,000
American Conservatory Theater	186,967
New York Shakespeare Festival	649,250
New York Public Library	5,827,000

As the capital city, Washington is a federal entity. It has no county or state government. The city itself is facing large deficits and is not in a position to provide maintenance and protection assistance to cultural institutions even though they are major attractions for visitors to the capital. The only equivalent in the District to those public bodies that provide support for maintenance and protection of cultural institutions elsewhere in the United States is the Congress.

Federal Impact

Lack of state, county and city funding is not the only problem created by location in Washington. While federal support of institutions like the Smithsonian and Wolf Trap Farm Park is proper and desirable, it inevitably places Washington's private institutions at a disadvantage. Approximately \$270 million is appropriated annually by the Congress for federally-supported cultural institutions. These funds give the federally-supported institutions superb facilities and a high degree of institutional stability and prestige.

They accustom visitors and residents of the nation's capital to excellence -- in physical facilities, in accessibility to all, in programs, in exhibits and services. All activities of the private institutions -- exhibitions, plays, concerts, publications, lectures -- must therefore rise to meet the standards set by the public institutions. Arena Stage and the Folger Theatre Group, for example, must compete in artistic quality with Ford's Theatre and Wolf Trap, yet they must also keep their ticket prices low enough to be competitive with these theaters in order to encourage attendance by the average visitor and local resident. Unlike Ford's and Wolf Trap, however, they must bear the full cost of maintaining and safeguarding their plants in addition to the costs of mounting their dramatic productions. To cut financial corners by compromising the quality of their programs would undermine their cultural goals and lead to extinction.

In addition to programmatic competition, the federally-supported institutions compete in another vitally important way. All of them are actively engaged -- with the encouragement of the Congress -- in seeking private support from donors, foundations and corporations. They thus compete directly with the private institutions for the same funds on which private institutions must rely for their survival.

It is not always realized that this intense competition is a relatively recent phenomenon. It has become acute only in the last two decades. To illustrate, since 1969, the following federal or quasi-public institutions have been established in the District of Columbia: Wolf Trap Farm Park, Ford's Theater, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Woodrow Wilson Center, the National Museum of Air and Space, the Hirshhorn Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, the National Collection of Fine Arts, the Renwick Gallery, and the East Building of the National Gallery of Art. The government has also assumed responsibility for the Museum of African Art and is undertaking an examination of the Freer Gallery and a feasibility study of a Museum of Architecture and the Building Trades in the old Pension Building. In addition, quasi-official status has been granted to such activities (involving heavy private fund-raising) as the White House Historical Association, the State Department Historical Commission, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

This competition, added to the already-existing competition from the older parts of the Smithsonian, the Library of Congress and other institutions, is quite literally overwhelming the private cultural institutions in the District of Columbia. It

is unique. It does not exist anywhere else in the United States. It has been created, though inadvertently, by the Congress.

We are not suggesting that support to federal institutions be limited or support from private sectors be forbidden. We suggest only that support for federal cultural institutions from the private sector should be balanced by support to the private institutions from the federal sector.

The principle of federal funds to compensate for impaction caused by federal programs is well established. In each state, be it Armed Forces children who must be educated or public lands which are removed from the tax rolls, the federal government compensates those who suffer hardship because of its actions.

The Need for Federal Help

Lacking federal assistance, the private institutions will be unable to provide services at a level worthy of the nation's capital. The recent decision of the Museum of African

Art to join the Smithsonian illustrates that the warnings sounded here are not idle. In effect, the African Museum went into federal receivership. Likewise, the bankruptcy of the Washington Theatre Club and the dissolution of groups such as the National Ballet Company and the D. C. Black Repertory Company show that private institutions can and do fail -- even while flourishing artistically and filling vital cultural functions.

If their needs are not met, the three institutions submitting this proposal will inevitably have to reduce programs and services. The Corcoran Gallery, for example, may be obliged to consider partial closure of its exhibition areas and curtailment of tours, exhibits and educational programs. The Folger may eventually find it necessary to eliminate all of its public and many of its scholarly programs; while Arena Stage may be forced to reduce its annual play season or curtail its per-play production budget. Ultimately, these institutions may be unable to continue at all as private institutions. Washington would then be left with a monolithic federal cultural presence, with a consequent loss of healthy diversity. And the burden on the taxpayer would be far greater if one or more of the three institutions were "federalized" than

if a timely assistance program were established to help them to continue in basically their present form.

These institutions are asking only for building maintenance and protection assistance, not for program or acquisition funding. All three institutions are ready -- even eager -- to compete with other institutions for program support solely on the basis of merit -- and currently do so. Since the federal government already provides support of this kind, both for cultural institutions which are entirely government-supported and for such "mixed" public/private institutions as the Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap Farm Park, Ford's Theatre, the Freer Gallery, and the National Gallery of Art, there is precedent for this approach

The three institutions are not seeking federal help without having explored all other options. There are few dramatic cultural achievements inherent in this kind of support. Critics do not write about, and patrons do not donate to maintain, the bricks and mortar and workers that are the foundation of the more visible activities of all cultural institutions. In other cities than Washington, much of this support comes from city, county and state appropriations. In lieu of these political entities, the three institutions turn to the Congress for assistance.

The principle of federal maintenance support for the three institutions was established during fiscal year 1980, when the Congress, under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, appropriated funds for the Corcoran Gallery, the Folger Library and, upon designation as an historic site, Arena Stage. The mechanism chosen by the Congress to insure oversight over the funding was that the funds would be provided through a cooperative agreement between the three institutions and the National Park Service. This arrangement continues to be appropriate, as the National Park Service also provides maintenance for Ford's Theater, Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts, the Kennedy Center, the Art Barn, and other institutions. It therefore has experience with the proper procedures to insure appropriate use of federal funds.

Statistical
Data

Comparative Levels of Attendance
at the Three Institutions

	Recording Years			
	<u>1976-77</u>	<u>1977-78</u>	<u>1978-79</u>	<u>1979-80</u>
Arena Stage	207,059	243,277	226,732	225,000
Corcoran Gallery of Art	104,157	117,127	125,000	340,000*
Folger Shakespeare Library	148,698	148,775	160,000**	171,000**
Totals	459,914	509,179	511,732	736,000

*Free admission instituted on April 21, 1979. Figures available for the Corcoran show attendance for the period September, 1980 - March, 1981, to be 300,000.

**Estimated figures. An electronic counter is being installed as part of the Folger renovation. Approximately 10,000 readers have been unable to gain access to the library due to renovation. Figures for 1980-81 are not available due to renovation.

Latest Demographic Figures for
the District of Columbia
and Adjacent Areas

Population of the District of Columbia as of Fiscal Year 1979	660,200
Population of the Greater Washington Metropolitan Area as of Fiscal Year 1978	3,041,800

Arena Stage

Maintenance and Protection Budgets

<u>Line Item</u>	<u>Actual Fiscal '79</u>	<u>Projected Fiscal '80</u>	<u>Budgeted Fiscal '81</u>
Salaries, Maintenance	\$ 86,663	\$93,724	\$99,725
Salaries, Protection	16,246	17,500	17,950
Benefits, Maintenance	18,512	21,794	21,675
Benefits, Protection	2,848	3,068	3,159
Equipment & Supplies	14,292	15,500	16,000
Utilities	100,586	100,000	100,000
Maintenance & Repairs	24,071	27,810	36,500
Insurance	<u>8,122</u>	<u>14,153</u>	<u>14,000</u>
 Totals	 \$271,340	 \$293,549	 \$309,009
 Total Operating Expenses	 \$2,752,166	 \$2,852,500	 \$3,206,058
 Percentage of Total Operating Expenses for Maintenance and Protection	 9.9%	 10.3%	 9.6%

The Corcoran Gallery of Art

Maintenance and Protection Budgets

<u>Line Item</u>	<u>Actual Fiscal '79</u>	<u>Actual Fiscal '80</u>	<u>Budgeted Fiscal '81</u>
Salaries, Maintenance	\$115,450	\$138,950	\$149,500
Salaries, Protection	99,146	151,900	165,000
Benefits, Maintenance	18,470	21,120	23,920
Benefits, Protection	13,830	23,087	26,400
Equipment & Supplies	38,594	52,175	55,990
Utilities	112,507	105,145	125,000
Maintenance & Repairs	46,127	57,245	60,000
Insurance	<u>198</u>	<u>198</u>	<u>200</u>
Totals	\$444,322	\$549,820	\$606,010
 Total Operating Expenses	\$1,089,742	\$1,352,999	\$1,750,000
 Percentage of Total Operating Expenses for Maintenance and Protection	40.8%	40.6%	34.6%

The Folger Shakespeare Library

Maintenance and Protection Budgets

<u>Line Item</u>	<u>Actual Fiscal '79</u>	<u>Projected Fiscal '80</u>	<u>Budgeted Fiscal '81</u>
Salaries, Maintenance	\$97,484	\$119,667	\$107,606
Salaries, Protection	111,794	111,278	131,186
Benefits, Maintenance	36,550	39,561	41,785
Benefits, Protection	15,245	15,311	17,889
Equipment & Supplies	14,397	15,250	16,500
Utilities	74,955	103,000	114,000
Maintenance & Repairs	27,241	38,000	35,000
Insurance	<u>6,817</u>	<u>11,828</u>	<u>14,000</u>
Totals	\$385,483	\$459,840	\$477,966
 Total Operating Expenses	\$3,311,166	\$3,585,778	\$4,332,295
 Percentage of Total Operating Expenses for Maintenance and Protection	11.6%	12.8%	11.0%

Support to Other
Institutions

STATE AND LOCAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT
TO PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

State and Local Funding				
<u>Institution</u>	<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Phoenix Art Museum Phoenix, Arizona (1979)	\$385,148	City of Phoenix Maricopa County State of Arizona	\$58,000 35,000 5,000 \$98,000	15.1 9.1 1.3 25.5
La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art La Jolla, California (1973-74)	*	COMBO (Combined Arts & Educa- tion Council of San Diego County)	*	"substan- tial grant"
San Diego Museum of Art San Diego, California (1978-79)	1,541,866	City of San Diego County of San Diego	300,906 123,430 424,336	19.5 8.0 27.5
Telfair Art Museum Savannah, Georgia (1979)	467,898	Local Government	183,193	39.2
The Art Institute of Chicago (1978-79)	18,365,552	State of Illinois Chicago Park District Tax	149,894 1,612,023 1,761,917	.8 8.8 9.6

*Amount unspecified

State and Local Funding

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Chicago Historical Society (1979)	\$847,125	Chicago Park District Tax	\$318,357	37.6
Dusable Museum of African American History Chicago, Illinois (18 months ending 1979)	563,537	Chicago Park District Tax State of Illinois	25,221 3,642 28,863	4.5 .7 5.2
Vigo County Historical Society Terre Haute, Indiana (1979)	22,000 - 25,000	Vigo County	9,000	38.3
Maryland Historical Society Baltimore, Maryland (1978-79)	693,425	city, county, state and federal grants	70,300	10.1
Walters Art Gallery Baltimore, Maryland (1979)	1,757,465	Baltimore City Anne Arundel County Baltimore County Maryland Arts Council	172,050 2,500 50,000 100,000 324,550	9.8 .1 2.9 5.7 18.4
Theatre-by-the-Sea Portsmouth, New Hampshire (1979-80)	400,000	*	**	6.0

*Type unspecified

**Amount unspecified

State and Local Funding

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Brooklyn Museum Brooklyn, New York (1979)	\$7,000,000	State Arts Comm. City	\$500,000 2,000,000 2,500,000	7.2 28.5 35.7
New York Public Library (research libraries) New York, New York (1979)	20,611,000	City of New York State of New York	1,852,000 3,975,000 5,827,000	9.0 19.3 28.3
Oregon Shakespearean Festival Ashland, Oregon (1979)	2,608,556	Oregon Arts Comm. City of Medford City of Ashland	20,700 11,250 5,000 36,950	.8 .4 .2 1.4
Portland Art Assn. and Museum Portland, Oregon (1978)	2,310,899	City of Portland Metropolitan Arts Commission Oregon Arts Comm.	*	*
Philadelphia Museum of Art Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1978-79)	8,288,026	City of Philadelphia Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Commissioners of Fairmont Park	2,528.520 100,000 362.584 2,991,104	30.5 1.2 4.4 36.1
The Columbia Museum of Art Columbia, South Carolina (1979)	398,381	City of Columbia Richland County	225,000 93,000 318,000	56.5 23.5 79.9

*Amount Unspecified

FINANCIAL SUPPORT BY PRIVATE DONORS,
CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS TO
FEDERAL AND QUASI-FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS
LOCATED IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

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John F. Kennedy Center
for the Performing Arts

Corporate Leadership Circle -- \$50,000

Alcoa Foundation
American Telephone and Telegraph Company
Atlantic Richfield Foundation
Exxon Corporation
International Business Machines Corporation
McDonald's Corporation
Mobil Foundation, Inc.
The Prudential Foundation
Standard Oil Company (Indiana)

Corporate Patrons -- \$25,000

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Champion International Corporation
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General Motors Foundation, Inc.
The Charles E. Merrill Trust
R. J. Reynolds Industries, Inc.
Time, Inc.
United States Steel Foundation, Inc.
Xerox Corporation

Corporate Sponsors -- \$10,000

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Arthur Andersen & Company
Coastal States Gas Corporation
E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, Inc.
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Hess Foundation, Inc.
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The Merck Company Foundation
Philip Morris, Inc.
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Raytheon Company
Shell Companies Foundation, Inc.
Texco, Inc.
Warner Communications, Inc.
The Washington Post Company

Corporate Donors -- \$5,000

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Allis Chalmers Foundation, Inc.
The Allstate Foundation
American Broadcasting Company
American Can Company Foundation
American Express Foundation
American Security Bank, N.A.
Bechtel Corporation
Bethlehem Steel Corporation
The Bristol-Myers Fund
Burroughs Corporation
Celanese Corporation
The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.
Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company
Chevron U.S.A., Inc.
Chrysler Corporation
Ciba-Geigy Corporation
Citibank, N.A.
Clark-Winchcole Foundation
The Continental Group, Inc.
Continental Oil Company
Corning Glass Works Foundation
Cummins Engine Foundation
Dark Industries, Inc.
Dayco Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Walt Disney Productions
Dresser Industries, Inc.
The First National Bank of Chicago
Fluor Corporation
Fruehauf Corporation Charitable Fund, Inc.
General Dynamics
The George Hyman Construction Company
Georgia-Pacific Corporation
Getty Oil Company

The Gillette Company
Gould, Inc.
John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company
Honeywell Fund
International Telephone and Telegraph Company
Johnson & Higgins, Inc.
Johns-Manville Corporation
The Johnson's Wax Fund, Inc.
The Joyce Foundation
Levi-Strauss Foundation
The McGraw Hill Foundation, Inc.
Martin Marietta
Metropolitan Life Foundation
Monsanto Fund
NCR Corporation
National Broadcasting Company, Inc.
National Geographic Society
Neiman-Marcus
Northrop Corporation
Northwest Industries Foundation, Inc.
J. C. Penny Company, Inc.
Perpetual Federal Savings & Loan Association
Philips-Dodge Industries, Inc.
Potomac Electric Power Company
Price Waterhouse & Company
Reader's Digest Association, Inc.
Reynolds Metals Company Foundation
The Riggs National Bank
Schering Plough Foundation, Inc.
Charles E. Smith Companies
Sperry Rand Corporation
Standard Oil Company (Ohio)
Sun Company
The Times-Mirror Foundation
Union Carbide Corporation
Union Pacific Foundation
United Technologies Corporation
Hiram Walker, Inc.
Wells Farbo Bank, N.A.
Woodward & Lothrop, Inc.

Corporate Contributions -- Less than \$5,000

Abbott Laboratories
Acacia Mutual Life
American Airlines
Ashland Oil, Inc.
Baker International Corporation
The Bendix Corporation
Black Starr & Frost, Ltd.
The Boeing Company
Borg-Warner Corporation
Burson-Marsteller
Cabot Corporation Foundation, Inc.
Chevy Chase Savings & Loan, Inc.
Continental Bank Foundation
Crum and Forster
Equitable Life Insurance Company
Ethyl Corporation
Federal-Mogul Corporation Charitable Trust Fund
Giant Food Foundation, Inc.
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Halliburton Company
The Hecht Company
Hospital Corporation of America
Lazard Frères & Company
Lever Brothers Foundation, Inc.
Liberty National Bank & Trust Company
Eli Lilly and Company
LTV Corporation
Loews Foundation
Mapco, Inc.
Mars Foundation
Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company
National Bank of Detroit
National Bank of Washington
National Permanent Federal Savings and Loan Association
National Savings and Trust Company
New York Life Insurance Company
Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation
Petrolane, Inc.
Phillips Petroleum Company

Reading & Bates Corporation
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Trans Union Corporation
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Folger Press
Coverage

The Washington Star

December 11, 1980

It's a Day for the Poets at the Folger

By Anne Marie Welsh
Special to the Washington Star

"Anything to avoid that ghastly wallowing," said Judith Johnson Sherwin as she read at the Folger Shakespeare Library yesterday afternoon. Sherwin was quoting Edith Sitwell who, as she amply demonstrated, was far more than "an eccentric and silly lady who wore funny hats and wrote almost nursery rhymes."

With three other female poets who did not wallow, Sherwin was in fact celebrating women writers. The occasion was both Emily Dickinson's 150th Birthday and the annual awards ceremony by the Poetry Society of America.

Introduced by the Folger's poetry consultant, Jean Nordhaus, who said her daughter had asked if Dickinson herself would be at the party, each of the nationally recognized poets — Carolyn Kizer, Linda Pastan, Sherwin and Carol Muske — explored the influences that shaped her own work. Each cited Dickinson as one of those influential figures, though none lingered long upon that brilliant, reclusive woman for, as Sherwin said, her work and their debt to it has long been recognized.

Muske began by reading Dickinson's arch retort to her condescending brother, Austin, saying "Emily Dickinson knew everything. Sometimes I think she was god." But she then proceeded to Gertrude Stein, to a poem by Kizer, and to Kathleen Frazer, one of her teachers from San Francisco State College, who works in Stein's syntactically surprising idiom.

Focusing her readings upon two figures still unjustly treated by the critical establishment, Sherwin then offered sometimes poignant examples from two poets who had forged their techniques alone, fearless "of being termed overly ambitious, too emotional or oracular." Sitwell, she said, stopped using her more obvious techniques as she grew more confidently unafraid of such criticism, charges never leveled, she added with graceful understatement, against such male poets as William Butler Yeats, who credited his technical system to spiritual voices.

Muriel Rukeyser, two of whose poems were read by Sherwin with a musicality and conviction more persuasive than any argument, was a revelation. Rukeyser, still not included in the best-selling standard anthology, the "Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry," has an imagination that moves in one poem from the African violet on a city windowsill out through the universe and back again to her daily resolve: "I will try to be non-violent one more day."

Herself the author of six books of poetry and recently the recipient of Playboy's prize for best contributor of a new short story, Sherwin also cited Kizer, whose "Running Away from Home," she said, she could read every day.

Founder of Poetry Northwest and the first director of the literature program at the National Endowment for the Arts, the imposing, exuberant Kizer read from both the poems and letter of Louise Bogan

who died in 1970. Entertaining her audience with her own and Bogan's outspokenness, Kizer served as a welcome corrective to the prevalent notion that women writers tend to be, at best, sad; at worst, wallowing, whiney suicides.

"The thought of moping around with a lot other writers trying to defend culture is not for me," she quoted Bogan, though as Kizer settled into the poetry itself she was visibly shaken by her poem "Te Daemon," a brilliant short work, so titled, Kizer said, because in those days "women still didn't speak of having muses."

Among the other readers were Gordden Link and Josphine Jacobson, vice-presidents of the Poetry Society of America, who read from four writers who won the Society's prestigious awards for poetry and translations.

When the celebratory portion of the program resumed, Linda Pastan began her exploration of influences with a Dickinson-inspired poem she wrote at age 13 during the rude beginnings of a writing career she once abandoned until "reading Adrienne Rich" brought her back to her craft. Now the author of four books of poetry, Pastan then quoted from one of her own later works citing Dickinson's "sheer sanity of vision," her "serious mischief of language," and most importantly, Pastan said, her "economy of pain."

No wallowing, indeed, as the participants adjourned to the Folger reception area — for the gingerbread Dickinson might have served in Amherst.

The Washington Star

December 11, 1980



Poets Carol Muske, Judith Johnson Sherwin, Carolyn Kizer, and Linda Pastan.

The Washington Star / Walter Oates

November 1980

WETA
TELEVISION 26
RADIO FM 91



The Folger Consort—Robert Eisenstein (viola da gamba), Scott Reiss (recorders and percussion), Ann Monoyios (voice), and Christopher Kendall (lute)—are featured in a recorder concert of music from England, Flanders, and Germany. Wednesday, November 19, 9:00 P.M., WETA/26 and FM 91.

The Washington Star

November 11, 1980

Getting the Inside Story on 'Museum'

By Deborah Papier
Washington Star Staff Writer

Museum-going has long been one of Washington's most popular activities, but now there is another kind of museum being talked about — particularly among the people who work for them.

The new attraction is the play entitled "Museum," produced by the Folger Theater and playing at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater through Sunday. The play has piqued the curiosity of curators, administrators and information officers, understandably eager to see how their visual world could be translated into drama.

The consensus seems to be that, whatever the play's theatrical limitations, Tina Howe's portrayal of the antics of a group at an avant-garde

art exhibit — the jive guard, the woman looking for the weather-vanes, the French couple searching for "le mot juste" — is right on the mark.

"The playwright captured a lot of what goes on in a museum," says Linda Ayres, assistant curator of American art at the National Gallery. Ayres was particularly amused by the scene where a flesh-and-blood old lady is mistaken for one of Duane Hansen's eerily life-like sculptures, and relished the many levels of art-imitating-life going on in that scene.

Lorna Tilley, director of special

events at the Corcoran, also thought the play effectively dramatized "the kind of thing we deal with all day long. The only thing missing," she adds, "was someone asking the guard where the ladies' room is."

But the fact that she hears those sorts of remarks all day was somewhat of a turnoff to Laura Lester, public information officer at the Phillips Collection. "I've heard them so often that they've become banal," says Lester. "Howe has a great ear for conversation — but so what?"

See **Museum**, E-5

"The playwright captured a lot of what goes on in a museum."

Linda Ayres
National Gallery of Art



Scene from "Museum" with Larry Rosler, Larry Marshall and June Squibb, inset, imitates life at museums such as the National Gallery.

Insiders' Look at 'Museum': Curators Discuss the Play

Continued From E1

Lester, echoing the critics' complaints about the play, would have liked it to "say something," to be more than a series of vignettes, however clever. "But I suppose if you began to really talk about the people in a museum and why they come there, you'd take yourself out of the realm of comedy," she says.

However, Irmelle Small, a volunteer docent at the Hirshhorn who took the play's cast through the museum, feels that the critics and cavilers are missing the point. In fact, so exercised was Small over a negative review in a county newspaper that she wrote a letter to the editor. In it she said that the reviewer did not comprehend "the essence of the play. It is a spoof, and a marvelous one. The audience roared continuously, and I haven't laughed so much in years. Laughter being a most rare commodity, at 10 cents a minute (admission to the 90-minute show is \$9) the play was a bargain."

Small starts laughing just thinking about some of the characters in the play, particularly the curator who talks about "post-conceptual" art.

"I saw myself on stage, and almost fell off my chair," she says. "I loved the way she gurgled with the language."

But Wendy Wick, curator of prints at the National Portrait Gallery, thought the play "more a caricature of the New York museum experience than the Washington experience."

Washington museums are free, Wick explains, and the fact that the museum-goer doesn't feel like "he's purchasing something" makes for a different range of responses.

But Stephen Weil, deputy director of the Hirshhorn, felt that the play did capture the different ways people respond to the art they are viewing. "There were the society ladies crossing off the exhibit on their cultural checklist, the people (the photographers) imposing their own art form, and the people who have an instant need to verbalize when they're in front of an art work. But there were also the people who were truly open to the art — who were, in fact, having transcendent experiences."

"In a museum, if there are 20 people, there are 20 different things going on. What's going on in the play covertly would be going on overtly in a real museum-going situation. The play makes manifest what is normally private."

Though the play pointed out to Weil "what an open, free situation museum-going is," he has ambivalent feelings about the work.

While watching "Museum," he says, he felt uncomfortable, finding it an "overexaggeration, with the caricatures too extreme. And the closing scene, in which a piece of art entitled "Wet Dream Hung Out to Dry" is vandalized, was very upsetting to him.

Weil has other problems with the work. "It's a piece of narrative rather than a drama," he contends. "But I'm not sure you can write a *play* about museum-going. It's not an inherently dramatic situation."

But remembering the scene where the art student is diligently sketching one of the paintings on display — part of a series of four blank canvases — Weil has to smile.

Poetry in Motion

By Joseph McLellan

Robert Bly is one of the most successful poets in America: He earns exactly as much money as he wants each year. And he does it without being on a university faculty, by treating poetry as a performing art. "I hear from a lot of universities that want me to become a poet in residence," says Bly. "My reaction is: Why bother? I'm already in residence in Moose Lake, Minnesota."

Most of the time, anyway. This week, Bly is in residence at the Writers' Center in Glen Echo, where he is giving workshops for poets. He began the week with a poetry reading in the Folger Shakespeare Library's Monday evening series, and Saturday night he will give another one at Glen Echo. It is already sold out.

Bly flew in from California, where he had been doing readings and workshops. Before that, it was Chicago, and next week he will be off again. Most of the year he spends with his family on a farm in Minnesota, but during October, January and April, he flies around giving readings for \$1,000 each, plus expenses (\$500 if he doesn't have to leave Minnesota; \$100 to \$150 for high schools). Bly decides how much to work after figuring the annual living expenses for himself, his wife and four children. With a daughter in the freshman class at Harvard, another in her last year of high school and two sons aged 8 and 14, he expects the readings to escalate in the near future.

"I get a couple of thousand dollars a year in royalties," says Bly, 54, who has written, edited or translated more than 20 books of poetry, and is also available on recordings. "But the readings are what I do for a living."

•••

"Quiet," said a sign outside the Folger's Shakespearean playhouse, "Performance in Progress." The sign, which is usually put up for plays or concerts, applies precisely to Bly. Most other poets read their poems; Bly performs his. Lately, he has taken to accompanying some of his poems on a dulcimer—letting the poem "float on the music like a boat on water." But he still performs some without music, in his older style: the hands swirl about at waist level, creating imaginary whirlpools around him, or they levitate toward heaven, the fingers weaving intricate patterns in the air. Sometimes a poem lures him into a little dance step, which may end with a graceful semi-pirouette on the final line—a sort of free-form

ballet with spoken accompaniment.

His own poems—from the earliest ("about snow and loneliness," he says) to the antiwar poems of the '60s to the later musings on human relations—draw heavily on natural imagery ("There are eyes in the dry wisps of grass, and invisible claws in the rooster's eyes"), though they range into other themes: ("Dreams press us on all sides, we stagger/along a wire, our children balance us/on their shoulders, we balance their graves/on ours.")

The performing style emerged early in Bly's platform career, after he began to memorize and perform his poems rather than simply read them out of a book.

"In 1962, when I was 36 years old, I discovered that people would pay me \$35 to do a reading," he recalls, "and I soon saw that if I read out of a book the reading would be a failure. When I was reading at home, with friends, I wouldn't use the book—just glance at it once in a while—and the poems would work . . . So I began to memorize, and found that my body was freed; my hands and body began to move without my planning it."

It paid off. "By the time I had reached 40," says Bly, "I had started to make my living by doing poetry readings. My fee reached \$500 when I was 45, and it keeps going up. I raised my fee \$150 when my hair turned white."

It's a drastic change from his early years as a poet. "When I started college," he says, "I planned to be a doctor, but as a freshman I fell in love with a woman who wrote poetry, and I started writing poetry to impress her. It didn't work, but I was very surprised when I read the poetry. There was something in it that I hadn't put there. Then I transferred to Harvard, where Archibald MacLeish was one of my teachers, and it began to dawn on me that it was possible to think of poetry as a career."

After Harvard, he spent three years in New York working as a file clerk, going hungry, living in solitude ("I couldn't even show my poems to anyone") and confronting his own failure. He believes that it was a valuable experience and that one of the disadvantages of university appointments and government grants to poets is that they are deprived of the chance to fail.

"They are put into assigned roles," Bly says. "The students take the role of 'young poet,' and they are praised if this week's poem is a little better than last week's, without reference to other



Robert Bly; by Jim Kalett

standards. The teachers become creative persons by faculty appointment. They haven't really gotten away from mother. When I began, there were perhaps five notable poets in the United States, and they were all wild creatures. Now, we have 500 notable poets and thousands of poetry students—but where is the poetry? Where is the energy?"

Bly began to attract a large national audience during the mid-'60s when he was giving readings at massive demonstrations against the Vietnam war. His lines are still powerful today:

"As soon as the president finishes his press conference
black wings carry off the words,
bits of flesh still clinging to them."

But he recalls some misgivings from that period: "At one rally, the speaker before me jumped up and shouted, 'Amerika is spelled with a 'k,' ' and the crowd went wild with applause. I said, 'If this crowd applauds my poems, I will commit suicide,' and I read in such a way that they would not applaud."

•••

Since then, the applause, like the fees, has grown steadily. Bly's poems have changed often in style and content; today, they are generally quieter than they were in the Vietnam years, and recently he has been focusing much of his attention on form. He has invented a new verse form that he calls the *ramage*, an old French term describing the song of birds and occasionally applied to pieces of flute music. "The ramage has 85 syllables in eight lines. I didn't plan it that way, but I wrote a few, and when I counted them up that's the way they were." One of his most recent rambages, he says, is "written in the key of 'ur.'" It has that syllable recurring in a variety of words, at irregular intervals, and the effect, when it is read aloud with a dulcimer, is uncannily musical.

THEATER



The Washington Star / Brig Cabe

Scene from "Measure for Measure" at Folger Theater.

A Great Election Year Play

By Anne Crutcher
Washington Star Staff Writer

"Measure for Measure," which opened a two-month run at the Folger last night, is one of the many dramas in which Shakespeare played with ideas about political power. He was endlessly fascinated with the problems of governing and the way different personality types succeeded or failed in trying to deal with them.

ness, next to Angelo, brings out all the big questions about innocence and justice and moral compromise. It is inevitable that Angelo, the inhibited ascetic, should for the first time in his life fall in love or, at least, succumb to an overwhelming lust.

Here the drama gets contemporary. Sexual harassment of a woman by a powerful man, complete with threats and promises and a warning that no one will believe her if she tells.

Usually, of course, his characters failed. He did know human frailty, that man.

"Measure for Measure" is one of his less solemn variations on the theme. Nobody gets killed. But it is more seriously and specifically concerned with the relations between public power and private virtue than many of the all-out tragedies.

In a word, a great election year piece. A piece with a lot to say to the Washington of Abcram and public officials with weaknesses for girls, boys, drink and cocaine as well as easy money.

The Vienna Shakespeare depicts in "Measure for Measure" is a city quite as dissolute as any on a contemporary map. He shows its ruler, the Duke, Vincentio, deciding to take a sabbatical to look the situation over from behind a disguise, leaving a supposedly reliable deputy to run the show in his place.

There is good-natured bawdiness everywhere except around Angelo, the righteous deputy, whose apparent virtue reflects nothing nobler than a cold nature. Pretty soon, they're closing the suburban whorehouses and sentencing people to death for fornication.

One of the victims of the new puritanism is Claudio, a nice young man who has done nothing worse than to impregnate the girl he wants to marry as soon as financial arrangements can be made. What could be more natural than to get his sister Isabella, out of the convent where she is a novice to plead for him?

Placing Isabella, a girl on fire with aspirations toward holiness,

Isabella of the passionate purity thinks it would be preferable for her brother to die than for her to submit. Poor Claudio admires her standards but can't help thinking about what it is to die "and go we know not where, to lie in cold obstruction and to rot . . . to be imprisoned in the viewless winds and blown with restless violence round about the pendant world."

The Duke, who by this time has a more honorable eye on Isabella himself, finds a way out for one and all. It's not Shakespeare the genius but Shakespeare the hack, getting a script slapped together — a matter of slipping the wrong virgin into Angelo's bed and further fooling him with a head that purports to be Claudio's but isn't.

No matter. The titillating questions have been posed and left dangling among the divine ambiguities where "man, proud man, dress in a little brief authority, most ignorant of what he's most assured, his glassy essence like an angry ape, plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep."

Brenda Curtis exudes a properly fierce integrity as Isabella. At the same time, she projects the tender and forgiving side of the character — a perfect foil for David Little's emotionally constricted Angelo.

As for Justin Deas, he somewhat overdoes the leaping and roaring aspect of his role as the Duke, but he looks grand and is likable enough so that one can be happy to see him get the nobly lovely Isabella. The rest of the cast is splendid too.

HOW TO SPEND A HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS

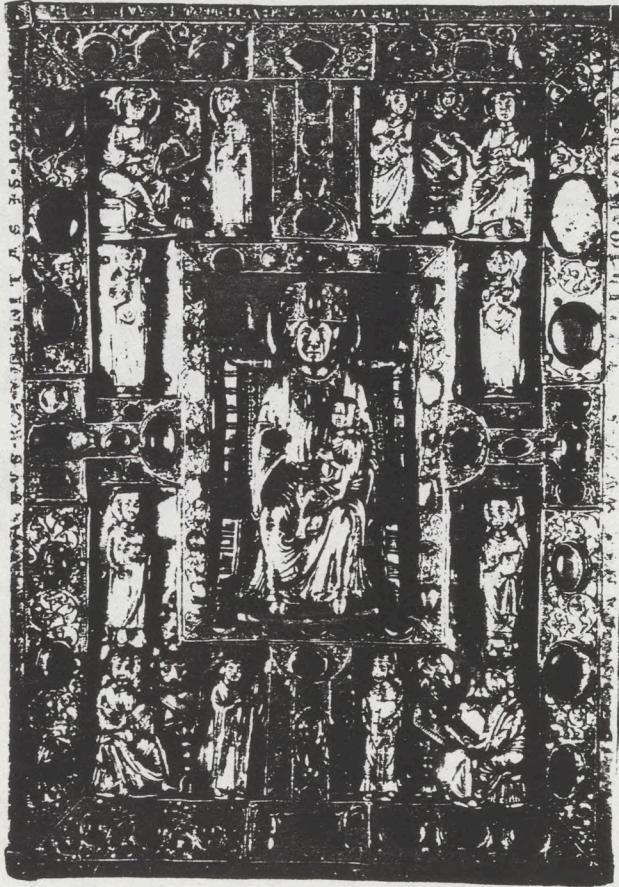
For the nineteenth century industrialist, money rolled in like the tide. Three major magnates—Morgan, Huntington, and Folger—solved the disposable income problem by buying books, to the enlightenment and enrichment of our country

by ALDEN WHITMAN

The nineteenth century was the springtime of capitalism, when faith in its basic principles was worldwide and utter. Thorstein Veblen had not yet coined the damning phrase "conspicuous waste," and persons of wealth were not plagued by conscience as they faced the vexing problem of how to spend the millions of dollars of surplus income that rolled in with tidal regularity every day, every month, every year.

Some were out and out rakehells, squandering their

Alden Whitman, a frequent contributor to ANTIQUES WORLD, is the author of *Come to Judgment* (Viking Press), which profiles thirty-four notables of the twentieth century.



Made for a medieval book of devotions, the Morgan Library's jeweled, silver-gilt missal cover is German, circa 1215.

extra money on fast women and slow horses, often spurred thereto by draughts of spirituous liquors. For example, Reginald Vanderbilt, the son of Cornelius 2nd, went through \$23 million in fifteen years, much of it lost in gambling. He died of a badly used liver at the age of twenty-seven.

Others were equally self-indulgent, if less destructively so. Alice Gwynne Vanderbilt erected her seventy-room "cottage," The Breakers, at Newport, Rhode Island. William Collins Whitney spent his ample surpluses on private railroad cars—he had the first in the United States—and on thoroughbred racing stock.

The monies made by Henry Edwards Huntington in railroads steamed directly into books and manuscripts. Although broadly based, the collection does reflect his lifetime interest in American and English history.



of its general scope and of its individual titles," according to Mr. Schad.

By 1913, it was evident that the Huntington Library would one day be opened to the public; George Watson Cole was hired as librarian in 1915 to care for the 40,000 volumes then on hand, including twenty-five Caxtons. To these books were added some 20,000 in late 1915 and many thousands more by Huntington's death in 1927.

The library and art gallery were deeded to the public in 1919, about the same time the library building, of classical design, was begun just east of the Huntington home; it was opened in 1920. By 1927 the library contained a steady sequence of first editions of English authors from Chaucer to Conrad; letters of George Washington were included among the 55,000 volumes (not items, but volumes) of Americana. In addition, 12,000 manuscripts were acquired from the Bridgewater House library in England to augment thousands of other manuscripts in the collection.

For reasons he kept to himself, Huntington had no wish to be the subject of a biography. "This library will tell the story," he said. "It represents the reward of all the work I have ever done and the realization of much happiness."

One can easily psychologize about the motives of wealthy collectors who are not primarily intellectuals: Did book-collecting for Morgan or Huntington satisfy a special ego need? Was it their attempt to "buy" immortality the way they purchased railroads or shipyards? No one can make certain answers, and perhaps it is just as well to accept the benefactions as a contribution to research and scholarship and culture without inquiring too closely into motive. Libraries tend to have lives of their own in any case.

That is certainly true of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., which was built (but never seen) by Henry Clay Folger, whose interest in and knowledge of William Shakespeare was both intellectual and emotional. Sadly, he died before the magnificent marble building was finished. It stands not far from the Library of Congress on Capitol Hill, and contains a mouth-watering seventy-nine copies of the First Folio (the first printed edition of Shakespeare's

works, dating from 1623), fifty-seven copies of the Second, twenty-three of the Third, thirty-seven of the Fourth, and 208 quarto editions of the Bard's plays and poems. In addition, there are 16,000 volumes of later editions of Shakespeare's plays, more than 75,000 volumes of books through the eighteenth century, and 60,000 modern titles. There are, furthermore, hundreds of thousands of playbills and other theatrical memorabilia. The whole constitutes a gargantuan feast for scholars and researchers, so lavish in fact that only a few polymaths are able to comprehend its totality.

The collecting was the work of Henry Clay Folger, who was born in New York City in 1857, the son of a wholesale milliner. Sent to Amherst College, he was obliged to earn his way, but he managed to win prizes in English composition and oratory and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Along the way, in the spring of 1879, he spent twenty-five cents to hear the aging Ralph Waldo Emerson lecture. Captivated by the force of Emerson's thought, he went back and read the philosopher's speech, "On the Tercentenary of Shakespeare's Birth," given in 1864. Profoundly impressed by this introduction, he pinched pennies to buy a "Handy Volume" set of the works of Shakespeare and stayed up nights to pore over its contents. "The passion of a lifetime had been born," said Betty Ann Kane, his biographer.

Folger studied law for a year after Amherst, and then joined Charles Pratt & Company, oil refiners in New York and already a part of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.'s Standard Oil Trust. Folger's career in Standard Oil of New York was one of a steady climb up the ladder from his initial clerkship to the presidency of the company, in 1911, and to the board chairmanship in 1923. He retired in 1928 to devote full time to the library and died in 1930.

His first purchase came in 1885, when for \$1.25 he bought a facsimile of the 1623 edition of Shakespeare's works and presented it to his bride. "Here you may read Shakespeare's plays as they were actually given to the world," he told his wife. The purchase has been

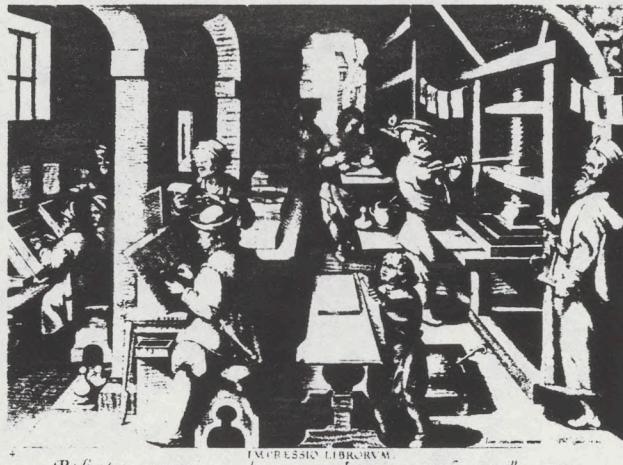


The facade of the Folger Library in Washington has bas reliefs of Shakespearian scenes.

Right, a printing shop c. 1600. Below, a painting of Henry Clay Folger. Below right, title page of a 1623 First Folio, which was called by Henry Folger "the most precious book in the world."



PHOTO: THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY



ENGLISH LIBRARY
Print ut vix vix capi sublunari
Littera tua serpens mille paginis.

MR. WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE'S
COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES.



LONDON: Printed for the Author, and are to be sold at his house in Drury Lane, by I. and J. D. 1623.

called "the cornerstone" of the Folger Library.

As the money gushed in, Folger and his wife, Emily Clara Jordan, a Vassar graduate with an advanced degree, began to collect Shakespeare materials; they both enjoyed the growing collection for its own sake, the triumphs and perils of the chase for rarities, and the eventual use to which their books would be put. Because Folger collected so quietly (publicity would have been ruinous to his aims), his collection was like an invisible planet whose mass could be conjectured only by the force of gravity that drew similar objects to it.

Folger's reason for his quiet yet persistent search for Shakespeare materials was not only to keep prices within moderation but also to soften possible criticism of his hobby from his business associates. According to Betty Ann Kane, Folger's adroit response once saved him from John D. Sr.'s displeasure. "As they were walking off a golf green, [Rockefeller] turned and remarked softly, 'Henry, I see from the papers that you just paid \$100,000 for a book!' Folger felt a sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach, but in the best tradition of book collectors through the ages recovered and said quickly, 'Now, John! You know better than anybody else how newspapers exaggerate, especially about things like that. If you buy something for \$10,000, it becomes \$100,000 in print.'

"There was a moment's pause; perhaps the wise old

man was unwilling to pursue so delicate a subject as money. Then he said, 'Well, I'm glad to hear you say that, Henry. We—that is my son and I and the board of directors—were disturbed. We wouldn't want to think that the president of one of our major oil companies would be the kind of man foolish enough to pay \$100,000 for a book!'

One of Folger's main agents was Dr. Rosenbach, through whom many of his great purchases were made. "He was the most consistent collector I have ever known," the bookdealer once said. "He had a definite plan and rarely deviated from it." Once the wily dealer tried to palm off a 1608 sermon as the source for *The Tempest*, but Folger would have none of it; scarcely abashed, Dr. Rosenbach withdrew the book.

On the other hand, Dr. Rosenbach could and did come through with authentic rarities, even interrupting a meeting of the executive committee of the Standard Oil board to reach Folger with the news. He had just purchased the Marsden Perry library, and his note to this effect brought Folger out of the meeting with one quick question, "Will you give me the first choice?" Of course, Dr. Rosenbach would, and did.

Of Dr. Rosenbach's associations with Folger, John Fleming, Dr. Rosenbach's successor and biographer, tells this story as true. "When Folger went into the hospital with his final illness, he was visited by both Baron Duveen, from whom he had purchased many paintings, and Dr. Rosenbach," Mr. Fleming relates. "As Folger lay stretched out in bed, he looked up at Duveen on one side and Dr. Rosenbach on the other and remarked, 'Gentlemen, in this situation, I feel very much like Christ between the two thieves!'

Mr. Fleming said he never pressed Dr. Rosenbach to say on which side of the bed, right or left, he had been standing, since according to tradition, the thief on the left had gone to hell while the one on the right ascended into heaven.

On other occasions, Folger employed different agents, as he himself recounted in this story of how he acquired a *Titus Andronicus*.

"One crisp December morning in the year 1904, *The New York Sun* announced, in no more words than were actually necessary to convey the news, that a copy of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, 1594, had been found in a peasant's cottage in Sweden, and was now deposited, for safe-keeping, with the librarian of the University of Lund. . . [I] stopped at a cable office and sent a wire to [my] London agent asking that a representative of his firm go at once to Sweden and get an option to buy this new-found treasure.

"Before the end of the day an answer came stating that a courier had started, and added the pertinent question, 'What is the highest you are willing to pay?' That was a poser for an enthusiast, whose means did not match his interest. It took three hours of tramping over city streets to clarify a bewildered mind suffi-

ciently to cable the answer, two thousand pounds [\$10,000]. It was a happy winning figure.

"During the next week another London dealer cabled he was about to offer me a superb Shakespeare gem, and a third dealer wrote he would soon submit the lost *Titus* of 1594. These were anxious days until the word came from London that the volume had been bought. It seemed that both dealers had also named two thousand pounds as the price they would pay. But my representative had the cash in hand, and, naturally, was given preference.

"It is idle to add that, at once, twice two thousand pounds was offered for the little pamphlet, and three times that in a few months—nor that ten times two thousand pounds would not be too much to expect should the treasure now be put on the market."

Folger and his wife were modest and reserved people who lived for years in a rather simple house in Brooklyn Heights. Starting in 1891, they made eleven summer trips to England, all by freighter, to visit libraries and booksellers. "Agents all over Europe reported items of interest throughout the rest of the year," his biographer noted, adding: "The treasures they found were personally examined at their home (or, later, at Mr. Folger's office), listed by Mrs. Folger, and then packed away in fireproof warehouses. At the time of Mr. Folger's death in 1930 there were close to 3,000 cases of books in storage."

Although Folger was under some pressure to set up his library in Stratford-on-Avon, he resisted, writing in one 1928 letter that his aim was "to help make the United States a center for library study and progress." In his collecting, Folger never had quite the financial resources of Morgan or Huntington, but since he had no children and lived frugally and without ostentation, his reasonably ample funds from oil could all go for books.

He personally selected and acquired the library site and employed Alexander B. Trowbridge and Paul P. Cret as the architects. They considered him the one perfect client in the history of architecture, since he declined to stint and he let them have their heads. The cornerstone was laid May 28, 1930; two weeks later Folger died in surgery. Mrs. Folger lived to carry out her husband's wishes, even to the point of making sure that lines from an Emerson poem on Shakespeare were carved over the Tudor fireplace in the library, which also contains the founder's ticket to that generative lecture. And the Emerson speech on the playwright was read at the library's dedication in 1932.

Book-collecting on that kind of Pharaonic scale is now, perchance, more institutional than individual, but these three magnificent libraries stand as testimony to an age when magnates could indulge themselves. And now we are the richer for it. 

From Paris circa 1565, the black morocco, gilt-tooled binding is inlaid with colored leathers.

From Basement to Broadway

GETTING 'CHARLIE AND ALGERNON' FROM THE BASEMENT OF A CAPITOL HILL CHURCH TO BROADWAY SOMETIMES SEEMED AS TORTUOUS A ROUTE AS THE MAZE THE MOUSE IN THE MUSICAL HAS TO RUN

BY NAN RANDALL

Below left: One more time . . . P.J. Benjamin, the Charlie of *Charlie and Algernon*, and the show's musical director, Liza Redfield, work over a difficult transition in the Eisenhower Theater's rehearsal hall. Below right: Leading lady Sandy Faison finds some quiet in her cheerfully cluttered Kennedy Center dressing room.



Photographs by Bill Snead

PROLOGUE

Hey. Got a great idea for a show. How about a musical starring a mentally retarded 32-year-old guy, a repressed schoolteacher and a hyped-up laboratory mouse? Terrific, no?

"You've got to be crazy," said David Rogers who wrote the book and lyrics for *Charlie and Algernon*.

"That's the dumbest idea I ever heard," said Charles Strouse who wrote the music for *Charlie and Algernon*.

SCENE: *The Eisenhower Theater rehearsal hall, Kennedy Center, July 2, 1980.*

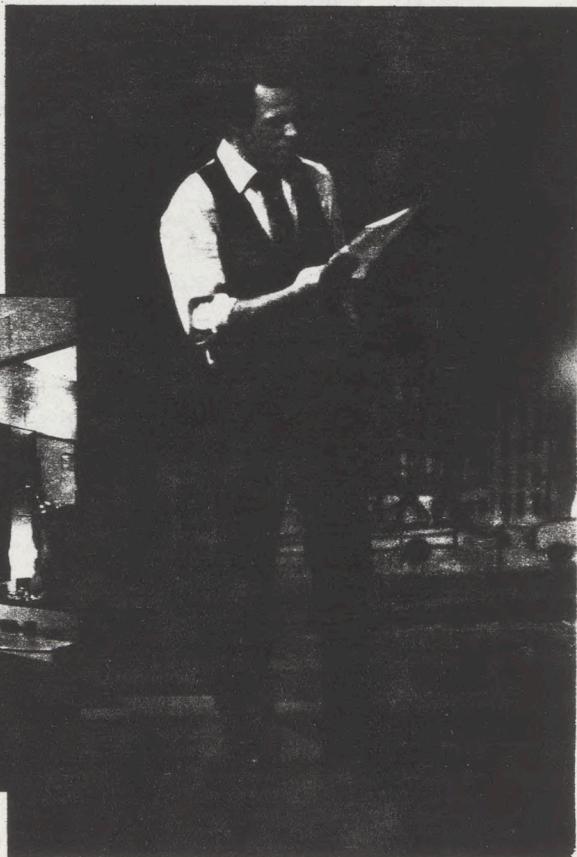
It's a reunion. The cast of *Charlie and Algernon*, a small musical produced by the Folger Theatre Group for the Terrace Theater of the Kennedy Center during the month of March, is about to start rehearsal. This time it's a pre-

Nan Randall is a Washington free-lance writer who specializes in the performing arts.

Broadway run in the bigger Eisenhower. Shouts, hugs, backslaps and kisses all around. Most of the group, which had first met in a Capitol Hill church basement in February, is reassembled. Objective: to take this 10-actor, 9-musician, one-mouse musical to New York in September to be a hit on Broadway.

Louis W. Scheeder, the usually rumpled producer/director of the Folger, has cut his hair for the occasion and donned a navy blazer. He is barely suppressing a wide grin. An awed silence greets the arrival of Roger Stevens, Kennedy Center chairman, producer of Broadway hits and éminence grise to *Charlie and Algernon*. The public relations department has a photographer on hand to immortalize the magic moment.

To work. The cast gathers around the piano, new scripts in hand, Charles Strouse and David Rogers playing and singing the music for the first read-through. There have been some changes but the basic story is the same: Charlie,



mentally retarded, undergoes an experimental operation to increase his intelligence. Algernon, the mouse, has already had the procedure and is brilliant. Soon, so is Charlie—and in love with his teacher. Then something goes wrong, and Charlie and Algernon plunge back to where they started.

Despite the early doubts of its creative parents, *Algernon* has persistently tried to scamper toward stardom. However, the route has sometimes seemed as tortuous as the maze he runs through in the play. He has undergone extensive surgery; he has faced premature burial. But, according to Isobel Robins Konecky, the singleminded producer who has backed the show from the beginning, "Each time we learn something. There is a little bit of each production in this one, and we're still finding out what works."

The odds on making a Broadway success—getting back your investment—are long. Of the almost 70 shows that prepared for a Broadway debut last season, only three

are counted as full successes; another 15 are unsure and the rest are failures, according to the industry bible, *Variety*.

Of all the art forms, the creation of a Broadway musical comedy has to be one of the most collaborative. Unlike a single artist producing a sonnet or a sonata, you are dealing with a seeming cast of thousands. The script and music are, of course, the point of departure, a collaboration of two or three writers. In the past few decades, the director has become a third collaborator, not only moving actors around the stage, but scenes and songs around the play. Playwright David Rogers, for example, did not care for the underlying concept of one of the productions of *Flowers for Algernon* (the play's original name) but had to acquiesce to the director. Only half in jest, Charles Strouse, composer of *Annie* and *Applause*, imagined what a Jerome Robbins or Gower Champion might tell Puccini about the opening scenes of *La Boheme*: "Listen, we'll introduce her quickly and

then get right to a big scene that sets the feeling of the Bohemian life. I don't care what her name is, or that her hands are cold." A director can make or break a good script.

Fourth collaborator, according to Strouse, is the audience. "In a musical, the audience tells you what to do." Every cough from the second balcony is monitored and analyzed. Is it flu or is it boredom? Why are the programs rattling? The idea, ultimately, is to keep the audience so entertained that it can barely take the time to breathe much less sneeze.

Charlie and Algernon, like most Broadway-bound shows, has had its ups and downs, twists and turns. Writer David Rogers claims to have drawers full of versions of the play he wrote some 11 years ago based on the Daniel Keyes novel, *Flowers for Algernon*. The play, not yet a musical, was commissioned by Rogers' publisher, Chris Sergel of the Dramatic Publishing Company, and became one of the best sellers in his catalogue. The play has been performed by countless schools, colleges and local stock companies.

When Strouse first read his long-time friend's play he was impressed but only gradually came to think of it as musical material. ("Of course, at first I thought the idea of a musical about 'Annie' was dumb,

which shows how good my judgment is. But we really didn't think of it for Broadway. We thought it might have a limited success in the regional theater...")

And, in fact, it was in the regional market that the musical version of *Flowers for Algernon* started. Originally the show was slated to open in Buffalo at the Studio Arena, but the production was sidetracked by a rights dispute with Cliff Robertson who had made the movie "Charly" based on the book. After that was settled, John Davidson expressed an interest which had everyone hopping for a bit, but that fizzled. Finally, in the winter of 1979, *Flowers for Algernon* opened at the Citadel, a well-respected regional theater in Edmonton, Canada. (P.J. Benjamin, now the star of the show in the role of Charlie, auditioned for and was offered the secondary role of Frank in the Canadian production. He was also offered the lead in the musical *Sarava*, which he took.)

The show received good notices and an enthusiastic crowd for the month it was scheduled. From there, the director Peter Coe, who had also directed *Oliver*, mounted a production in London with popular British star Michael Crawford in the part of Charlie.

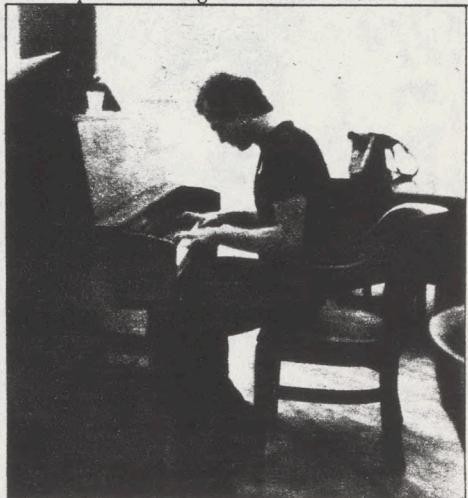
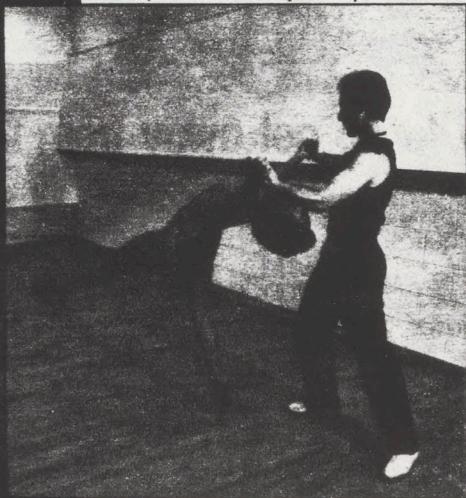
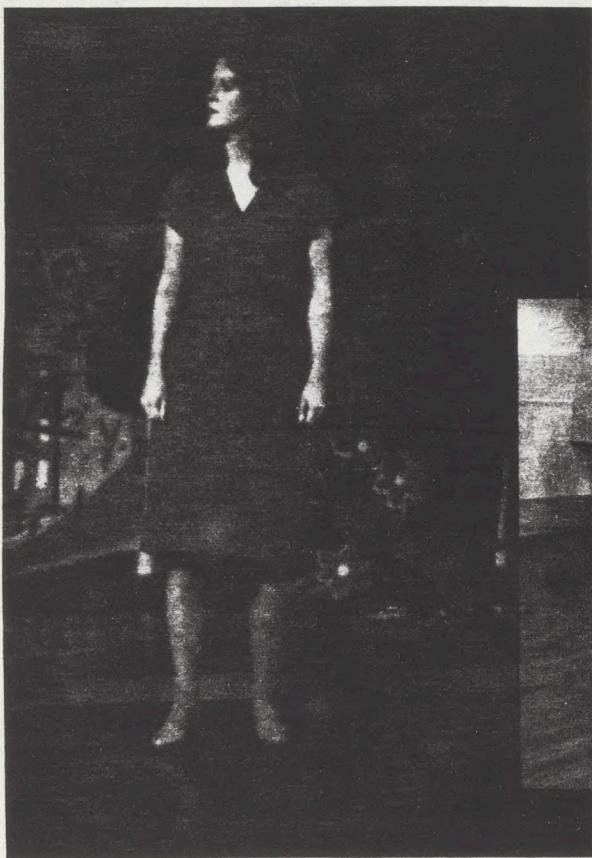
Why the London show did not catch on is a matter of dispute and conjecture. Certainly it had many good reviews and its closing provoked editorials, a *Punch* cartoon and a march on the theater. Isobel Robins Konecky, who produced the show with an English producer, believes they did not have the time to build an audience and that the timing was bad. (While expressing admiration for Coe's concept, the authors found the production somewhat cold and clinical.)

"I cannot tell you how dead that production, that project, was when it closed in London," recalls Michael Sheehan, associate producer at the Folger. "As far as any one was concerned, it was finished and done."

Except that Dramatic Publishing's Chris Sergel, who has been the spiritual godfather to the show from the beginning, still believed. His enthusiasm, and Louis Scheeder's lack of a spring show for the Terrace, meshed with a gratifying clunk. (Roger Stevens is on the board of the Folger Shakespeare Library, home of the Theatre. He offered the Terrace to Scheeder for two productions a year. *Charlie and Algernon* was to become the second production.)

Scheeder's reaction to Sergel's suggestion was, "We don't do musicals." But, as

Left: On stage but still in rehearsal, Benjamin and Faison run through still another version of the "Whatever Time There Is" scene. Below left: Dancers Loida Santos and Patrick Jude rehearse the energetic "Midnight Riding" scene. Below right: Take five . . . Benjamin fools around at the piano during a rehearsal break.



Sergel had written one play for Scheeder and obtained a couple more, he read the script as a favor. By the closing scene he was convinced—and desperate. It was mid-December and the show would have to go into production in February. In fact, as the negotiations took place, Folger employee Tom Madden waited outside the door for the go-ahead to deliver the casting requirements to the agents the theater uses most often.

The first conferences with Rogers and Strouse produced remarkable agreement. Rogers particularly was pleased. "From the questions Louie Scheeder asked," says Rogers, "I could tell he had much the same concept I did. And a lot of what he wanted, I had already. I'd tell him it was in the brown script or the blue one or the yellow one. For example, the 'Jelly Donuts' number was written for London but never used. Someone told me they don't have jelly donuts in England, but after the opening I passed a bakery and there they were. But also, Louie wanted to move the action out of the hospital and make a lot of what were dream sequences into current action."

"One of the first things we did was change the title," says Scheeder. "It gave us a good, new feeling, as though this were a new project. It also gave us a title song, which is no small thing." (It tends to be the show-stopper, which is also no small thing.)

Not everything came easily, of course. Both Strouse and Rogers had to march back to the drawing board, knowing full well much would never be used. Strouse estimates that he has written about 10 songs that have not been used—there are some 18 in the show. The song, "Tomorrow," now the hit of *Annie*, was in the show briefly during a period when *Annie* was going nowhere. When the cast for the Terrace production turned up for first rehearsal, they got their first look at the revised script, and Scheeder had started scratching in changes.

SCENE: Folger Theatre Group rehearsal hall/Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, February 5, 1980.

Eleven actors, gathered together for the first time, eye each other with curiosity. Two 10-year-old boys, one of them my son, John-Carlo Paolillo, and the other, John Mueller of Arlington, are set to alternate in the role of little Charlie. They are the only non-Equity—the actors' union—members of the cast. Two actors, Sandy Faison who had appeared in *Custer* at the Terrace earlier as well as on Broadway for two years in Strouse's *Annie*, and local

actor Bruce Ed Morrow, have worked for the Folger before; the others are strangers to the small, regional theater which is in its tenth season. Powdered coffee and creamer are on one table, mounds of forms on another and the "blue-bound" scripts nearby. Martha Knight, veteran of managing the touring company of *Annie*—she ran the kiddie auditions, too—received her script only three days before the first rehearsal. By the time the show opens four weeks hence, she will note that only three pages are unchanged.

Four white mice, refugees from the National Institutes of Health, await their formal audition, to be run by the young star of the show, P. J. Benjamin. P. J. uses a technique he learned from a friend who trained seals. He puts food in one part of the cage, and a bright nickel in another. One mouse shows more interest in the shiny object—or perhaps he is into high finance—than in the food, and he is awarded the role—and the name—Algernon. The second most curious mouse is appointed understudy and given the name Thurlow. (One wears a red dot on his tail, the other a blue.)

But Benjamin has more responsibility than just mouse training. On his shoulders rests the success of the show.

The role is enormous. ("I think he's on the stage all but six minutes of the show," says Rogers.) It is also complex. He must go from retardate to genius and back again, and sing and dance.

"I have been studying for this role all my life," explains Benjamin. "You know that my sister, Margie, is retarded, though I would rather use the word 'special,' and she lived at home with us. I watched when kids were mean to her. At least from the outside, I have an idea of what her life was like." Obviously proud of his sister's accomplishments, he has dedicated his performance to her. Benjamin ended up in acting by being dragged into a high school performance of *Carousel* in which he juggled a plate. "With the applause, I was hooked," although he had had plans to become a veterinarian and completed two years of pre-med at Loyola. He won his first professional audition for the road company of *Promises, Promises* by beating out his own dance teacher.

His audition for *Charlie and Algernon* was somewhat out-of-the-ordinary as well. He thought he was trying out for

the role of Frank—the one he had been offered for the Canadian production—as well as for the understudy slot for Charlie. Called back to read again, Benjamin was subjected to more than two hours of readings. Scheeder made him try one part, then another, then another. "I thought they had no idea what they were going to do with me," says Benjamin now. But in Scheeder's mind was the growing realization that this young man was Charlie, not Frank. (Benjamin's agent had cautioned him against reading for an understudy's part in a regional theater. It was beneath him.)

"When Louie called me to say I had the part, I had been out drinking with a friend and I was, well, a bit tipsy. When he said I was Charlie, I spent the rest of the night trying to call all the bars to find my friend so I could tell him: I couldn't even find the buttons on the phone."

After what Martha Knight calls "show-and-tell" about Kate Edmund's set, the company is off on first read-through.

The single rehearsal hall becomes rehearsal halls. Downstairs in the basement some actors are working out a difficult scene while upstairs dancers clank. An elaborate set of rings and bells provides communication. Charles Strouse flees to the "belfry," a small space above the church where the toddlers play during services and the choir rehearses, where he can work out transitions on the piano. David Rogers scratches corrections, changes, new lines, or old lines in a crook in the staircase where he can find peace.

First run-through—Martha Knight called it "stumble-through"—went the way it was supposed to: terribly. More changes are in the works.

Three weeks into rehearsal, Roger Stevens drops by the Presbyterian Church for a run-through. He says nothing and, according to several sources, never lifts his head from the script.

The next morning, he and Scheeder are meeting to discuss the possibility of bringing the show into the Eisenhower in August. There is a hole in the schedule that *Charlie and Algernon* could fill.

"When we picked up *Charlie and Algernon*, I can't say that we weren't thinking that maybe, just maybe this was the show that could go onto Broadway. You often think that. But that is not the reason that we picked the show," says Folger associate producer Michael Sheehan. "Producers are al-

ways calling us to ask if they can get us to do a tryout for them. They know that it is cheaper to work in regional theater, the Equity costs are lower, and they know that a lot of fine work has come out of the regional theaters. But we are not interested in doing someone's pre-Broadway tryout. We thought that *Charlie and Algernon* was a Folger kind of show, and our total concentration was on preparing the four-week run in the Terrace." (There has been some criticism of regional theaters for producing "commercial" shows in a nonprofit setting. To counter that, theater people point to the example of Joseph Papp's ubiquitous and totally lucrative *A Chorus Line* whose profits allow Papp to produce many of his experimental shows.

Performance

The first preview has a couple of sticky technical problems but goes relatively well. As an experiment, Scheeder decides to reverse the order of two songs and the second preview is a disaster. "The show made no sense," Scheeder remarked later, "but we had a terrific rehearsal the next day, and we learned important things about the show. Lousy Thursdays became a tradition. We would have an awful Thursday and then do wonderful work the next day." The actors rehearse all day, perform in the evening previews.



P. J. Benjamin as Charlie and his little friend Algernon.

Opening

The curtain comes down on a standing ovation. The audience loves the Saturday night performance. The reviews, however, are mixed; the critics see problems but can't quite figure out, as a group, what those problems are. P. J. Benjamin gets fairly universal raves, and the mouse is an out-and-out hit. Algernon, who with his understudy has had daily training with Benjamin, has

learned to climb up his sweater and slide down his arm, as well as dance (?) in his own tiny spotlight. He follows the sound of Benjamin's soft-tapping feet—P. J. means warmth and protection, perhaps from all this noise—and appears to be the consummate performer. (If he fails to do anything, Benjamin is prepared to dance around him and the scene still works.) Even The New York Times critic, Mel Gussow, is uncharacteristically gushy about the mouse.

Back Into Rehearsal

Throughout the entire Terrace run, the show is in rehearsal during the day. "If we had gotten completely bad reviews, we wouldn't have rehearsed so much," said one cast member, "but we were encouraged to try to do better."

The two children alternate learning the new lines and business each day—and stage manager Martha Knight has to be sure to teach the other child what the first had rehearsed—while the rest of the cast swims upstream. P. J. Benjamin and Sandy Faison sing love songs backwards, forwards, standing and sitting, not to mention walking. On the Friday before the closing (Sunday), Scheeder restages the main love scene, "Whatever Time There Is," for the umpteenth time. He decides to use his own old bathrobe for Ms. Faison's costume.

"The more we can do now, the better off we are," said Strouse during a break. "It will cost three times as much when we are pre-Broadway."

Remarkably, no one really blows his or her lines. "Every once in a while you could see the little wheels turning while an actor picked his way through the lines, but usually it worked out so that the audience couldn't possibly have known," said Knight after the run.

Is this rehearsing, all of this rerunning and trying out, isn't this the sign of an unhealthy show? (Next door in the Opera House, a pre-Broadway show is rehearsing and re-rehearsing. Nothing seems to get *Swing* swinging.)

"I think it is the sign of a healthy show," says Charles Strouse from the sidelines. "We can be making changes right up till the show closes and, when we go to New York, right up till opening night there. Most of these changes are small ones; they are fine-tuning, but they can make a big difference."

Several weeks into the run, Scheeder announces that the show will definitely be coming back to the Eisenhower; he makes no commitments to casting, however. Stevens announces the plans at a Press Club luncheon. *Swing* announces its closing. *Charlie and Algernon* cast members are sympathetic; many of them are friends of *Swing* cast members, but they note, "No one's heart was in it. They knew it was a turkey."

The Terrace engagement closes with good houses and a general sense that all has gone well. For a cost of around \$190,000, the Folger Theatre Group has put on a show that has made waves beyond Foggy Bottom.

Interlude

David Rogers and Charles Strouse plan to write new material before they have forgotten the lessons of the Terrace. Then both have commitments for other work. Scheeder is to direct the final production in the Folger Theatre, *Twelfth Night*. But the *Charlie and Algernon* project simmers happily on the back burner. Scheeder and Sheehan start hunting for a theater in New York. They settle, after some negotiation, on the Helen Hayes, which is known as a straight-play house—seating around 1,000. As a number of straight—as opposed to musical—plays are backed up trying to find a stage in New York, *Charlie and Algernon*'s choice is not popular.

Pre-Broadway

Although the cast is mainly the same—a few replacements are due either to a change in the concept of the character, a dancer needed for Frank, for example; or the inability to travel and live in New York, my son and his alternate for example—the early rehearsals for the Eisenhower have a kind of breathless, go-for-broke quality. "There is no question that, for some reason, New York is where you prove yourself," says Strouse.

More changes. Choreographer Virginia Freeman wants to restage the "Midnight Riding" scene from a slow blues number to a fast-paced disco. She and composer Strouse spend a productive day reworking the music, and Freeman resets the steps on Patrick Jude and Loida Santos. A full hour of working on one lift leaves Jude minus some skin on his shoulders.

On the mouse front, Algernon has learned a new trick. Or is it Thurlow? (During the Terrace run, Algernon had started to pull a star temperament. He wanted to sit in the spotlight and enjoy the applause, but not to dance. His understudy, Thurlow, was substituted because, like most understudies, Thurlow understood you have to hustle to get ahead in show biz. Afraid of too much mouse advice, stage manager Knight put a gag rule on the mice and the cast, and it was unsure which mouse did what in the Terrace or the Eisenhower.) After three months of Benjamin's tutoring, both mice know how to climb climb up his pant leg so long as shoelaces don't get in the way. Virginia Freeman is delegated to find Benjamin dancing shoes that had no offending laces.

Two Difficult Scenes

"One Bright Morning," the number which takes Charlie from psychosurgery to the beginning of his new-found intelligence, has been changed. The new number is "One Step at a Time." Scheeder is not happy with the ending. "I want Charlie to exit waving that blanket like a flag. Pianist Tom Fay makes some changes in the music. "It has a fine beginning," says Scheeder. "We need six versions of the ending." This number is not a working number.

"The Montage," perhaps the most complicated scene to stage, is aimed at showing Charlie's mental deterioration quickly and dramatically and at getting more people back on stage for the "production value." To do so, the writers have taken bits and pieces from the script and score and woven them in and out of a nightmare to show how the past is crowding Charlie. The idea is fine; so far the execution is not so fine. "Ask me where I am and I'll tell you I'm writing the 'Montage' again," says Rogers. He's not really kidding. Should the characters be seen or should they be off-stage, disembodied voices? In the Terrace Theater version, the characters from the past do a kind of noisy cabaret dance. Now Freeman is trying a phalanx of threatening creatures moving toward Charlie like the hungry cadavers from "The Night of the Living Dead." So far, at least six versions of the 'Montage' have come and gone. Numbers seven and eight are in the works.

Opening Night

Another standing ovation greets the cast, although the whistling of some kids bothers audience and actors alike. Algernon—or is it Thurlow?—performs beautifully. On first preview, the mouse had (1) headed downhill on Benjamin's sweater and (2) failed to climb his leg. This time, perfection. Is it a new mouse? Or does he understand this is the Big Time?

In first preview, the lights had performed somewhere behind the mouse. First the computer had failed for the press photo call, and then had been "down" up to 12 minutes after the curtain was due to go up.

But on opening night, Algernon/Thurlow, the lights and the cast mesh, and the show brings the audience to its feet.

Again, the reviews are mixed.

Can this show succeed?

The chances of success are exceedingly slim. Industry insiders note that advance sales are likely to be small as the name, P.J. Benjamin, is not going to grab the matinee set. Many people may be unsure about seeing a show about a mouse and a retardate, although the book continues to enjoy a lively success.

On the other hand, the show has the financial backing of Roger Stevens and Kennedy Center Productions, the bunch that brought us *Annie* and *West Side Story*. It has also brought in its share of turkeys.

On the plus side, the show is, for a musical, very cheap. The mini-musical is very much

the coming thing on Broadway this year and, contrary to expectations, several of them have done well. *Charlie and Algernon* is expected to cost less than \$500,000 up to the New York opening in mid-September. *Forty-Second Street*, the David Merrick/Gower Champion extravaganza that shared the Kennedy Center with *Algonquin*, is reputed to have cost more than \$2 million in Washington. In New York it spent weeks trying to open at the reported \$100,000 a week in rehearsal costs. Obviously, the more expensive show has to do a lot better to make back the investment.

The day after the Eisenhower opening night, an exhausted Scheeder is making plans to go to a baseball game. Eagerly, he asks everyone what they thought, and everyone gets into the act by telling him.

"I think we may try an intermission." He then took it out after a week's trial. Then three weeks into the run a new song was added.

"We just have to try new things. We have the luxury of finding out what works." ■

The Washington Post Magazine/September 7, 1980

August 3, 1980

'Charlie and Algernon'— The Mouse That Scored

By Joseph McLellan

WE DON'T do musicals," was producer-director Louis Scheeder's response last year when a new production was offered to the Folger Theatre Group.

Nonetheless, the company did the musical last spring—an improbable thing called "Charlie and Algernon" about an idiot who becomes a genius and a laboratory mouse who does the same thing rodent-style.

Now, after the Folger's "Charlie and Algernon" finishes its second run at the Kennedy Center, the Shakespeare Library's resident drama company will be setting another precedent with the same show—sending a production to Broadway for the first time. The Folger's best-laid plans of mice and men seem to be going well.

"Back By Popular Demand," say the billboards outside the Eisenhower Theater, where "Charlie and Algernon" will be playing for the next four weeks. But no one will see "Held Over By Popular Demand" pasted over that notice. Trucks will be waiting outside the Kennedy Center when the show closes its final performance on Aug. 30, and the loading of scenery will begin before the curtain calls are ended.

The show is scheduled to open four days later at the Helen Hayes Theatre in New York, with a day off in the interim for Labor Day. The Helen Hayes stage is slightly smaller than the one at the Eisenhower, but the production will fit: "snugly," according to Scheeder; "with a shoehorn," according to the ones who have to do the actual fitting. The sce-

See ALGERNON, G8, Col. 1



By Harry Nalchayan—The Washington Post

P.J. Benjamin (Charlie) and Algernon.

"Algernon and Benjamin have the kind of rapport that's essential for partners in a song-and-dance routine"

ALGERNON, From G1
nery at the Eisenhower could have been about five feet wider than it is, but it would have been too tight for its next home—where the Folger group hopes to keep it for a few years.

The show is the fifth incarnation of material that began as a science-fiction short story by Daniel Keyes, grew into a novel, "Flowers for Algernon," in the mid-'60s and then became a film, "Charly," starring Cliff Robertson. It was adapted into a play by David Rogers for the Dramatic Publishing Company, which leases scripts for performances (largely by schools and other nonprofessional groups) all over the country.

The script became one of the company's five top sellers, and one day Rogers proudly showed it to a friend, Broadway composer Charles Strouse, whose credits include "Bye Bye Birdie," "Applause" and "Annie," as well as less-known operas and symphonic music.

"After he read it," Rogers recalls, "he came back and said, 'I want to make a musical of this,' and I told him, 'You're crazy.' But we started working and there it is."

Mental retardation, the morality of scientific experiments on animals and human beings, the differences between idiocy and genius as reflected in the life-style of a man who goes from one to the other and back again—these are not, in fact, the kind of entertainment Broadway likes to offer to tired businessmen. But they are the basic ingredients in the story of Charlie, who goes temporarily from an IQ of 68 to genius-level and then sinks back—and of Algernon, the mouse who has had the same operation before him and in whose rise and fall Charlie can read his own future. If it was not quite crazy, Strouse thought, it would probably not be commercial the way "Annie" was. "I did this one as a labor of love," says Strouse. "My expectation was that it would never really work in a house of more than 500 to 700 seats—it's too intimate, and anyway people have to be able to see the mouse."

They will be able to see the mouse both in the Eisenhower and the Helen Hayes. Scheeder and Sheehan took P.J. Benjamin (who plays Charlie) and Algernon (who plays himself) into both houses and watched from the rear balconies while they did their climactic song-and-dance routine on stage. "We had no trouble at all seeing Al," Sheehan reports.

Al has an understudy, Fulbert, who presumably paces about his cage hoping for the star to have a small mishap so that he can get a moment in the show's tiny mouse-spotlight. Both mice live with Benjamin, who trained them and has established the kind of rapport that is essential for partners in a song-and-dance routine. Benjamin's contract includes a clause allowing him to keep the mice (who were saved from a laboratory) after the show has finished its run. Benjamin's understudy, Phillip Alan Whitt, also has two understudy mice who live with him.

The show had already been tried out in Canada and England before it had its American premiere in the Folger production last March, and it was still undergoing the usual pre-Broadway changes during rehearsals for the second Washington run. The number of instrumental musicians has been raised from seven to nine because the musicians' union insists that nine must be hired for any musical at the Helen Hayes whether they are used or not. A song called "Some Bright Morning" has been dropped, "One Step at a Time" has been added, the rhythm has been changed in "Midnight Riding" and some of the staging has been altered. The show now opens and closes with Charlie riding on a swing, and the thematic love song, "Whatever Time There Is," has been moved from an indoor to an outdoor setting. But the version that will be going to Broadway is almost the same

as the production that played here last spring, with almost all of the original cast.

There is currently a shortage of theaters for new productions in New York. At least two shows are closing "out of town" this summer because they can't get a home on Broadway. Once they had nailed down the Eisenhower for August, the co-producers, Scheeder and Michael Sheehan, had to scramble to find an appropriate house in New York for early September.

"It was a real domino-type situation," says Sheehan in a lightning-fast, nameless monologue that sounds like an old Danny Kaye routine:

"At first, we didn't think it would fit technically into the Hayes, which was where we wanted to do it, so we began to look at other houses. The Royale would have been the right size, and it has a good name because 'Grease' ran there forever. But 'Days in Hollywood, Nights in the Ukraine' was playing next door at the Golden, which is a much smaller place, and the management was holding the Royale open in case the show became a hit and wanted a place with more seats.

"Then we looked at the Plymouth; 'Ain't Misbehavin'' was playing there, but they were thinking of going to a bigger theater—but that was uncertain. At the Barrymore, 'Romantic Comedy,' with Mia Farrow and Tony Perkins, was doing okay, and the owner had a commitment with Jean Kerr that her new comedy directed by Mike Nichols would have either the Barrymore or the Plymouth. So it was all up in the air."

"We couldn't fit in the Ambassador technically, and ANTA wasn't the right kind of house for this show, so we ended up at the Helen Hayes, the first place we had looked at."

As Scheeder and Sheehan talk about their search for a playhouse, the conversation turns to Broadway folklore and superstition, the "good houses" and "bad houses," even good streets and bad streets—legendary theaters that "have never had a hit" and others that are specially desirable because the public still remembers a great show that played there 10 or 15 years ago.

Producers in search of a theater watch ticket sales to see which shows are likely to be moving out and to feel the pulse of the public. "There was a dip in ticket sales last spring—a very substantial dip—and nobody could figure out why," says Sheehan. "Finally, they decided that people just didn't want to go to the theater as much in the first week after daylight-saving time began. Some times of year are harder than others for booking a theater. As you approach the time for the Tony Awards, plays that are marginal will hang on, hoping for a Tony to boost ticket sales."

An earlier Folger production, "Creeps," played off-Broadway a few years ago, but "Charlie and Algernon" marks the first time a production originating with the Shakespeare library has gone to Broadway. The estimated cost of the trip will be somewhere between \$425,000 and \$475,000—about one-fifth what it cost for "Forty-Second Street," the last musical to head north from the Eisenhower. Funding for the production is being provided jointly by the Kennedy Center and the Fisher Theatre Foundation, and it comes at a time when Folger productions are beginning to find audiences elsewhere: "Castles" in Stamford, Conn., for example, and "Love Letters on Blue Paper" in Philadelphia.

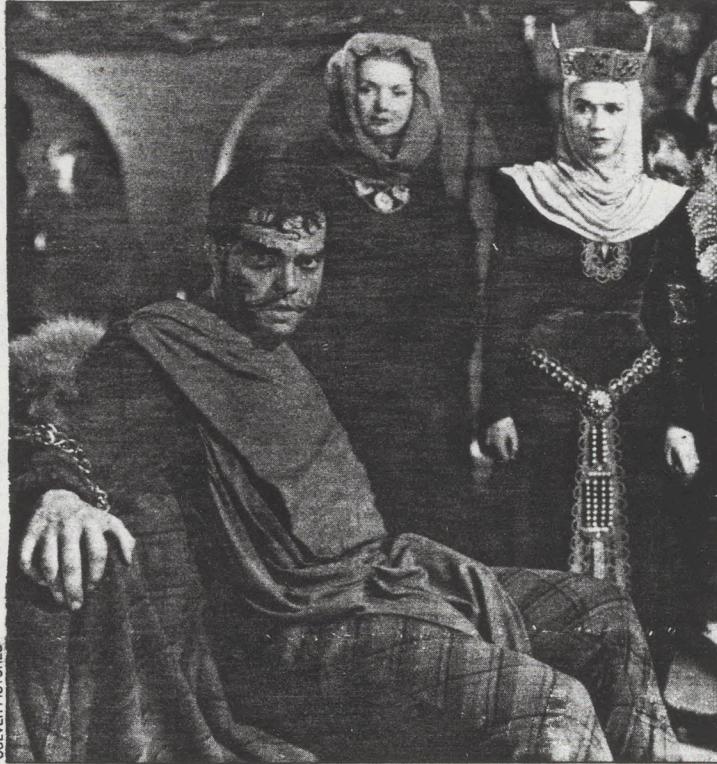
"Folger productions have been starting to travel in the past year," says Scheeder, "and naturally we welcome this development. But we try to concentrate on producing our seven-play season. We haven't started looking around to see which productions we can send to Broadway—that would be crazy."

Crazy like setting "Flowers for Algernon" to music.

FILMS IN FOCUS

Village Voice

July 1, 1980



Welles as Macbeth: more Wellesian than Shakespearean, of course

The Melancholy Scot

By Andrew Sarris

MACBETH. Directed, written, and produced by Orson Welles. A Mercury Theatre production released by Republic Pictures. June 27 and 28 at the Thalia.

ROUGH CUT. Directed by Don Siegel. Written by Francis Burns, based on Derek Lambert's novel *Touch the Lion's Paw*. Produced by David Merrick. Released by Paramount Pictures.

BRUBAKER. Directed by Stuart Rosenberg. Written by W. D. Richter, based on a story by Richter and Arthur Rose. Produced by Ron Silverman. Released by 20th Century-Fox.

CARNY. Directed by Robert Taylor. Written by Thomas Baum, based on a story by Robbie Robertson and Phoebe and Robert Taylor. Produced by Robertson. Released by United Artists.

The very enterprising Thalia Theatre will be exhibiting on Friday, June 27, and Saturday, June 28, the original version of Orson Welles's *Macbeth* (1948), as restored by UCLA archivist Bob Gitt in collaboration with the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D. C. This reconstructed version is almost half an hour longer than the only hitherto available version, and the studiously Scottish accents of the cast are restored to the soundtrack, in place of the "Americanized

deburring" substituted by a panicky studio. The movie still looks ludicrously low-budget, as befits an offbeat project from Herbert Yates's poverty row Republic Studios, better known for the campy vehicles of Vera Hruba Ralston, from the mid '40s to mid '50s. Still, Republic did sponsor such eccentrically ambitious works as Ben Hecht's *Specter of the Rose*, John Ford's *The Sun Shines Bright*, Fritz Lang's *House by the River*, and Nicholas Ray's *Johnny Guitar*. Only Ford's *The Quiet Man* broke beyond the cult level to become a popular success.

For Welles, however, *Macbeth* was a particularly galling experience inasmuch as it was shown at the Venice Film Festival in the same year as Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet*, which eventually went on to win an American Oscar, an honor denied to *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Furthermore, it was ironic indeed that a British film should be so much more opulent and better financed than a Holly-

July 1, 1980

wood film. Today, *Macbeth* looks much more interesting than it did at the time, and *Hamlet* much less. *Hamlet* is, of course, much the better play, but Olivier missed a golden opportunity by paying too much heed to Ernest Jones's tortured Freudian interpretation of the text. The great Freudian Hamlet of our time was John Gielgud, strikingly crippled by Oedipal conflicts the character could neither resolve nor sublimate. Olivier, our most agile romantic actor, should have played Hamlet as the Renaissance prince, whose mind and wit darted too quickly among the medieval shadows of the court to cope with its trials and rituals. Far from being the tragedy of "a man who could not make up his mind," as Olivier's own inanely portentous prologue puts it, *Hamlet* is the tragedy of a mind that explodes into too many pieces of scattered brilliance for any sustained emotion. The grievous cuts in Olivier's *Hamlet*—Fortinbras, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern—were amply criticized at the time. And, except for Olivier himself and Basil Sydney as Claudius, the level of acting was not as extraordinarily exemplary as it was to be in Olivier's *Richard III*. Nonetheless,

Hamlet, though confused in its conception and diminished in its execution, was a grand show studded with histrionic coups.

Welles's *Macbeth*, by contrast, is clouded by a somber melancholy that is more recognizably Wellesian than Shakespearean. More suitable for either *Lear* or *Othello*, Welles's patented brand of cosmic grandiloquence seems out of all proportion to Shakespeare's grubbiest and most abstract tragic protagonist. The cheap and craggy sets become a metaphor for the mental labyrinth of Macbeth's feverish mind in which there is no room for psychological suspense. Jeanette Nolan's Lady Macbeth never achieves much rapport, much less passion, with her understandably preoccupied mate and actor-manager. At times she seems to project some of the "ruthless dame" quality of the noir films of that period (certainly not the least of which was Welles's own *Lady from Shanghai* with Rita Hayworth as his real-life Lady Macbeth). Welles, with his often monotonous obsessiveness, seems a type more aptly fitted for Marlowe than Shakespeare. Yet his *Macbeth* stays in the mind as a cinematically unified achievement in a way that Olivier's *Hamlet* does not. It is no longer a pathetic joke in his career, but a coherent projection of a romantic ego capable of both the emotional fire of the 19th century and the ironic chill of the 20th. No serious devotee of the cinema can afford to miss this latest milestone in archival preservation.

THEATER

By Anne Crutcher
Washington Star Staff Writer

'Twelfth Night' Has New Magic at Folger

"Twelfth Night" is one of the inner circle of Shakespeare plays that never go stale no matter how many theater greats find it necessary to test their virtuosity on them. There's always some new magic to bring out of Viola's yearning love and Malvolio's vanity and the drunken roughhousing of Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek.

It's happening all over again at the Folger. The new production is pure joy from "If music be the food of love, play on" to the last gentle melodies celebrating the wind and the rain.

The Folger Theater Group is no longer straining to be different about such a play. When they first did "Twelfth Night" nine years ago, — and it was their very first effort — it was all geodesic domes and unisex twins.

None of that this time. Just a superb straightforward staging in the traditional manner.

It's even rather hard to say who is the star. Certainly Ellen Newman is as merry and tender a Viola as anybody could want. The volatile face that served this charming actress so well in "The Taming of the Shrew" a few weeks ago expresses a particularly rich range of nuances as her Viola registers both the wistfulness of the unrequited lover and the dismay of the person who can't requite somebody else's crush.

Viola is endearing for the ardor and openness of her character even — perhaps especially — when she is letting concealment, like a worm in the bud, feed on her damask cheek. Portraying that was one of the strengths of Helen Hays in the role a generation ago. This Viola is also extra bewitching in her doublet and hose.

But even so delectable a heroine is up against real competition for top honors in this production. No, not just from a good-looking twin brother, either. She has that all right in Eric Zwemer, who actually makes a convincing twin for her. But the competition is elsewhere.

Floyd King, as Feste is that good. He has a splendid voice for "O mistress mine" and the other beautiful songs that alternate with his one-liners. King also has a face, a demeanor and a sense of timing that rise to the extraordinary demands Shakespeare put on his fools. That too was conspicuous in King's performance as Christopher Sly in the most recent "Taming."

Floyd King is one of those actors who make you forget present satisfactions to remember past ones and contemplate the rest of what he could do with his talent. One longs to see this man as Touchstone and King Lear's fool.

Shakespeare put all his worldly wisdom into the mouths of his fools. Some of it has a little too much bite to be funny. Memorable, though, yes.

And then there's Malvolio. This one looks like a mad blend of John Barrymore and Salvador Dali with a little Misha Auer thrown in and he revels in the greatness he feels thrust upon him with a relish worthy of even their flamboyance.

If a "Twelfth Night" is at all amateurish, it's terribly easy to get impatient with Sir Toby and Sir Andrew. Not here, though. These two variations on the Falstaff theme are fun all the way. Ralph Cosham's Sir Andrew manages to be superbly silly without becoming a bore. And Earle Edgerton handles Sir Toby's gross behavior with a delicacy and humor that keep it from going over the line into mere swinishness.

Once Orsino has made his music speech, he doesn't have much to do except be around for Viola to sigh over. Count Stovall's achievement is cutting so handsome a figure and moving around with such vigor that he seems quite worthy of Viola's worship. Which is saying a lot.

"Twelfth Night" will be on through July 27.



Earle Edgerton, Ralph Cosham and Floyd King in "Twelfth Night."

The Bard's Return

All's Right With
Folger's 'Twelfth Night'

By Jean M. White

"Twelfth Night, or What You Will" was the first Shakespeare play produced by the Folger Theatre Group nine years ago. Now Folger returns with a new "Twelfth Night," the mirth mellowed with maturity, the high spirits carrying a haunting undertone.

In a director's program note, Louis W. Scheeder, the Folger's theater producer, observes: "There is 'mirth,' 'laughter' and 'youth' aplenty in 'Twelfth Night,' but there is also a sense of their fragility."

This is the "What You Will" that the Folger Theatre Group brings to its new production of "Twelfth Night." It is not a rolicking romp, although the fun is still there with some of Shakespeare's most comic creations—the pompous and conceited Malvolio, the scialaw Sir Toby Belch and the silly Sir Andrew Aquecheek. But Feste, the fool, is no longer so much the clown as witty commentator on the ironies of life.

"Twelfth Night" turns on a plot of mistaken identities and misdirected passions with the young lovers happily paired off at the end after a series of preposterous comic misunderstandings.

It is the tale of Viola and Sebastian, twin brother and sister, each of whom believes the other has perished in a shipwreck. Viola dons male attire and the name Cesario and enters into the service of Orsino, the duke of Illyria, whose love of the lady Olivia is unrequited. It becomes a tangled romantic quartet when Olivia falls in love with Cesario, who is really Viola and who loves Orsino.

Under Scheeder's direction, an able cast brings this mellowed "Twelfth Night" to the stage beautifully. The production is an example of unselfish ensemble acting, with some of the actors in comic roles muting the robustness of their performances to keep the spirit of the production.

The Folger's new "Twelfth Night" production is the play of Viola and

Tuesday, June 10, 1980

All's Right With 'Twelfth Night'

Olivia with strong, spirited performances from Ellen Newman and Glynnis Bell.

As Viola transformed into Cesario, Newman is a bright and cheeky youth. She swagger about the stage in her male attire but there is always a touch of feminine softness lurking beneath the surface. Her face mirrors an impatience, not without humor, at Olivia's advances.

Bell's Olivia is lively and spirited. She flutters with her new-found passion for Cesario. And she creates a delicious moment when she mutters "Most wonderful" as Sebastian, the twin brother, appears with Viola-Cesario and it appears she may have her love in double.

If their roles are muted in the Folger's new production of "Twelfth Night," the comic characters still have their moments with Shakespeare's mischievous word-play and scenes full of farce and pratfall.

Davis Cromwell is the prim and pompous Malvolio, Olivia's steward who can be guiled into believing that his mistress loves him and particularly so when he wears yellow, cross-gartered stockings and an idiot grin on his face. The unaccustomed smile cracks his face. Fool that Malvolio may be, Cromwell manages to invoke sympathy for the silly, stuffy steward as the victim of a practical joke. For Malvolio, it seems true, as Feste observes, that the whirligig of time does bring revenge.

The rest of the cast does just fine in keeping the spirit of this mellow "Twelfth Night"—Earle Edgerton, who is particularly good as the tipsy Sir Toby; Ralph Cosham, who prattles foolishly as the foppish Sir Andrew

Aquecheek, and Maria, the devious wench who falsifies Olivia's letter to hoodwink Malvolio.

As the male half of the romantic quartet, Count Stovall and Eric Zwerner have lesser roles than the two women but do well by Orsino and Sebastian.

Everyone, down to the smallest role, handles Shakespeare's language with ease, style, and clarity. And Floyd King, who plays Feste, gives some poignant renditions of Shakespeare's songs, including one of the bard's love-lies, "Come away, come away, death."

Scheeder makes imaginative use of two-level staging in the Elizabeth-style theater at the Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 East Capitol St. "Twelfth Night" will continue through July 27 to offer a delightful summer diversion in Washington.

Bard Times at the Folger Theater

By Michael Kernan

You know you're immortal for sure when they celebrate your 416th birthday with a flea market.

William Shakespeare was born yesterday. He was a Taurus. (So were Marx, Freud, Hitler, Hearst, Barbra Streisand and Ulysses S. Grant.) Good old Taurus.

No, really, it was a lovely party at the Folger. They sold costumes for \$3 to \$250 and Fiberglas shields for \$75. They sold T-shirts, old playbills, stained glass and baubles.

But that was just the beginning.

There was an afternoon tea party. Twigs and Lady Henderson, wife of the British ambassador. There was a fashion show, a wine and cheese party where you could eat and drink all you could hold for \$15 (with the famous bartender Baseball Bill Holdforth, dressed as Falstaff, holding forth at the beer keg) and a mayor's proclamation.

Actor Brian Corrigan roamed the scene looking just exactly (so they told me) like Shakespeare himself, and volunteers in Renaissance clothes were everywhere. Later the group heard some harp music and watched a takeoff on "Richard II."

But the thing you really wanted to be there for was the kids. They had a festival of excerpts from plays by the Old Boy, and they came from six schools, as far away as Vienna, Va., fourth- to sixth-graders.

We missed the Murch school version of "Macbeth" with six Witches (everyone always wants to be a Witch) but did catch the Haycock school's opening scenes from the play. We can report that King Duncan's voice is changing and that Lady Macbeth



*At the Folger's Shakespeare festival, Lauren Schaefer and David Allen perform an excerpt from "Taming of the Shrew"; photo by Harry Naltchayan—
The Washington Post*

looked smashing in a black gown with pearls, striking sparks in her scene with Macbeth, who wore horn-rimmed glasses like a power-mad executive.

Carderock Springs school presented a brisk "Romeo and Juliet" in a shade over 21 minutes, cutting directly from the banishment to the tomb scene. The acting was vehement.

That infallibly funny play-within-a-play from "Midsummer Night's Dream" was done with verve and pratfalls by Grace Brethren Christian day school, ending with a silent, ghostly dance of fairies.

Between plays, children wandered about in their capes and boots (plastic, with the fleece-lined tops turned down) and swords and crowns and charcoal mustaches. They made a lot of noise and skittered around like water bugs when they got the chance.

Parents drifted among them with anxious faces and shopping bags full of cloth.

The "Midsummer Night's Dream" people all wore yellow T-shirts with their names on the back: Bottom, Quince, Indian Boy and so on.

Someone called for a show of hands: How many had never seen a Shakespeare play before? Everyone. How many had never seen, heard or read one before? No one.

Child actors don't believe in wasting time with pauses in their dialogue, so the whole program went along very quickly. The morning show ran nearly an hour ahead of schedule.

In fact it all happened so fast that some parents missed seeing their kids in action. One of the stars of "Taming of the Shrew" was so upset that they repeated the excerpt later.

Nobody missed a single line all day.

Shakespeare would have been so touched.

The Washington Star

The Play's the Thing, for Kids, Too

By Caroline Stewart
Special to The Washington Star

How would Shakespeare react if he saw children reciting his lines of power, love and jealousy? Or if he saw a 10-year-old girl playing Hamlet and another playing Macbeth?

The Folger Library, keeper of all things Shakespeare, has created just such a scenario.

Yesterday, six area elementary schools — Potomac, Carderock, Murch, Haycock and Grace Brethren Christian Day School — competed for final awards in the first annual Emily Jordan Folger Children's Shakespeare Festival. Funded by the Redskins Foundation, the festival was organized by the Folger Volunteer Docents.

Judy Daly, who supervises the Folger's volunteer activities and books the museum's tours, last spring initiated a program that would make Shakespeare's Elizabethan world more relevant for today's elementary age child.

She believes it's important for "children to get a positive exposure to Shakespeare at an early age and to have fun at the same time." "Then," she adds, "when they are reading Shakespeare in junior high school, they won't be so intimidated."

To generate interest in the area schools, the Folger last fall sponsored teacher workshops that were conducted by Albert Cullum, a professor of education at Stone Hill College (North Easton, Mass.), who is well known for his work in using dramatics as a teaching technique in the elementary school.

Taking scenes from his book, "Shake Hands With Shakespeare," an abridged version of eight of Shakespeare's plays that eliminates the subplots allowing the children to focus on the main theme, each of the 11 participating schools presented a 20-minute performance of one of the plays.

Over 280 children from 11 area schools participated in the first round of the competition that was held last week at St. Mark's Church.

Schools interested in participating in the festival next year should contact Judy Day at 546-5370.

The Washington Post



By Fred Sweets—The Washington Post

Marifrances Hardison, with Ellington students Vincent Hawkins, Evangeline Essel, Melchus Davis and Franchell Mack.

• Theater • Entertainment • Music • Arts •

UPBEAT

At a reception Sunday, Dr. O.B. Hardison, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, reminisced with guests about the resurgence of culture in Washington in the last few years. Culture has spread past institutions such as the Kennedy Center and the National Symphony Orchestra, Hardison said, to grass roots groups such as the D.C. Youth Symphony Orchestra and even into our public schools.

And so it was fitting that Hardison and the Folger were hosting a small part of the grass-roots community to talk about the past with members of Washington's future cultural community—students from Ellington High School.

The occasion was the opening of the third annual student art show, a Folger-sponsored event. Hardison called it a way "to share in the really remarkable rebirth of culture in Washington. . . that culminated in the founding of the Ellington School of the Arts."

The student show includes 35 pieces of art including paintings, pencil drawings, macrame, pottery and photographs which will be on exhibit through May 7 in the small Anne Hathaway Gallery in the lower level of the Folger Library at 201 East Capitol St.

Eleanor White, Robert Van Kluyve and John Andrews, all local artists, juried the exhibit and selected three winners.

Vincent Hawkins, a senior art student at Ellington, won first place for his reclining, near life-size figure in pastel, "Portrait of Denise." The figure is expertly posed—arms crossed, legs outstretched. It is obviously the

result of many hours of careful drafting by Hawkins.

Evangeline Essel won second place with a self portrait in pencil. The work is a realistic, no-nonsense portrait which attempts to capture her physical attributes and inner strengths.

Franchell Mack won third place for a pencil drawing and Desiree Dodd won an honorable mention for a still-life in pastel.

The three winners each received cash prizes of from \$10 to \$25, and warm wishes from the students, parents, teachers and gallery sponsors who mingled at the reception.

"I'm very happy that our very young school already has some traditions," said Ellington principal Maurice Elbridge. "And this is a major tradition."

Marifrances Hardison, wife of the director, and Pat O'Brien, volunteer coordinators of the Hathaway Gallery, initiated the student art show three years ago. Under their direction, the Folger also helped this year to purchase materials for framing and hanging the 35 pieces in the show, contributed to the cost of printed invitations and programs and also presented \$150 to Ellington's theater and music departments.

Prior to the reception, eight music and drama students gave a half-hour program of songs and readings that ranged from Negro spirituals and the sometimes bitter-edged words of contemporary black writers to medieval sonnets and the eloquent soliloquies of Shakespeare.

The program ended with praise and encouraging words from Hardison who said quoting Shakespeare, "If music be the food of life, play on."

—By Leah Y. Latimer

The Washington Star

Founded in 1852

MURRAY J. GART, Editor

SIDNEY EPSTEIN, Executive Editor

WILLIAM P. McILWAIN, Deputy Editor

EDWIN M. YODER JR., Editorial Page Editor

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1980

Happy birthday, Will

"Who's your favorite writer?" the gruff older man asks the bookish boy in *Da*.

"Shakespeare," says the boy, hopefully. But it's a pretension that draws a putdown.

"Nobody's favorite writer is Shakespeare," his mentor assures him.

Which is one of the few things wrong with the engagingly Irish Hugh Leonard play now on at the Kennedy Center.

The point is that Shakespeare, whose birthday is today, refuses to turn into a mere credential, to be put back on the shelf once his name has vindicated someone's cultural dignity. Producers keep wanting to put on new versions of the plays. Actors go on aspiring to the great roles. Scholars can't stop trying to pin down the ambiguities of the characters and their predicaments. And ordinary people still regularly fall in love with phrases, cadences and insights that come to them out of Shakespeare's lines with the thunderclap surprise and certainty of, well, falling in love.

There is always something new to be discovered. The latest British *Henry IV*, Part I is a particularly poignant illumination of the maturing process and parental failure to understand it. Even as the king is wondering aloud why his kid can't be like the purposeful Hotspur, Prince Hal is building an identity.

In the horsing around with Falstaff, the antithesis of every self-discipline, Prince Hal is testing his own feelings about the inner controls maturity and leadership require. All the jokes on Falstaff simultaneously acknowledge the attractions of sloth, cowardice and uncurbed sensuality and repudiate them. Prince Hal is preparing himself for the day when, with the words "I am not as I was," he will send Falstaff away and emerge as that paragon of kingly virtue, Henry V.

It is our good luck as Washingtonians to have the Folger in the shadow of the Capitol, forever extending the boundaries of what we know about Shakespeare's work and the milieu in which it appeared. It is our good luck as television watchers to have the BBC proceeding with its presentations of fresh versions of the plays. It

is our good luck as English-speakers to be at home with the raw material of the Shakespearean verbal splendors.

It is our good luck as human beings to have the light and dark of our natures refracted through such a consciousness.





THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MARION BARRY, JR.
Mayor

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

FOLGER THEATRE GROUP DAY

APRIL 23, 1980

BY THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

A PROCLAMATION

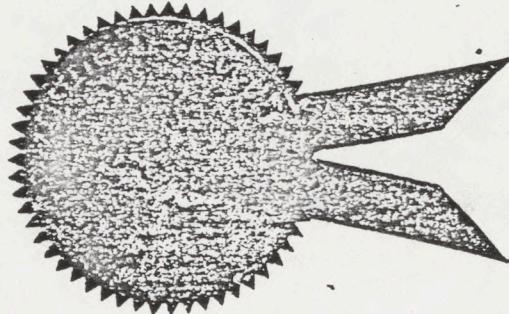
WHEREAS, on Wednesday, April 23, 1980, the Folger Theatre Group will hold its second annual "Shakespeare Fair on the Air" to raise funds to keep this outstanding Theatre Group operating; and

WHEREAS, the Folger Theatre Group, a professional, non-profit, residential theatre, is in its tenth year of presenting seasons of Shakespeare, the classic, and innovative new plays; and

WHEREAS, the Folger Theatre Group is the nation's first professional theatre to develop an accessibility program for the deaf and hearing impaired, recently selected as a model pilot program by the National Endowment for the Arts; and

WHEREAS, the Folger Theatre Group has conducted valuable Shakespeare in the Classroom projects in association with the D.C. Public School System:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, do hereby proclaim Wednesday, April 23, 1980, as "FOLGER THEATRE GROUP DAY" in Washington, D.C., and call upon all of the residents of our city to join with me in supporting the aims, goals and programs of the Folger Theatre Group during this day and throughout the year to benefit the further growth and development of the cultural life of our great city.



Marion Barry
MARION BARRY, JR.
MAYOR
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

APRIL 7, 1980

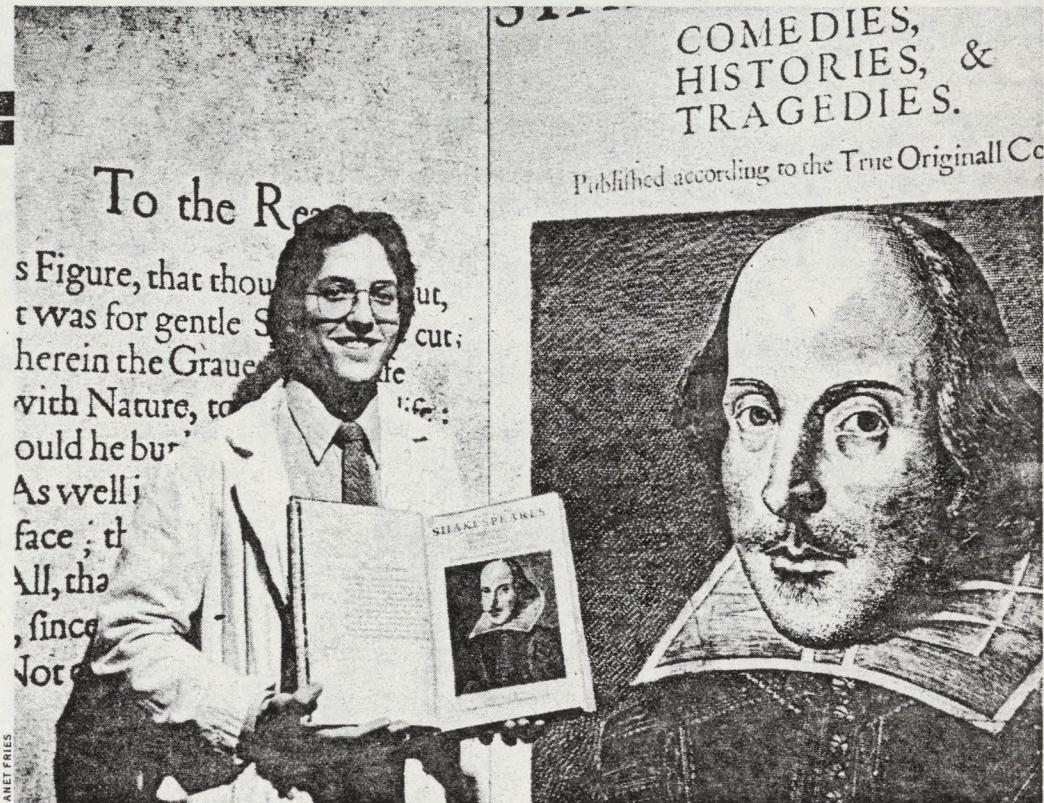
People

weekly

LOOKOUT

A GUIDE TO THE UP AND COMING

Frank Mowery, 26, may have the cleanest hands in Washington, D.C. And well he should. "I get to handle some of the most magnificent objects in the world," he explains. As head conservator of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., Mowery is charged with restoring and preserving —among other priceless artifacts —79 of the 240 existing First Folios of Shakespeare's plays, one of Henry VIII's schoolbooks and Elizabeth I's personal Bible. An important part of the collection, insured for \$5 million, is now on a 23-month, six-city U.S. tour. Both Mowery's parents are librarians, and he was only 17 when he started dusting and restoring books for his father. In 1971, after graduating from high school in Springfield, Ohio, he entered the National Academy of Fine Arts in Hamburg, West Germany as the only pupil of master bookbinder Kurt Loden-berg. Later Mowery received a grant to work in Florence restoring books damaged during that city's devastating 1966 flood. Three years ago he was of-



ferred one of the top jobs at the Folger, where at all times he has 10 books in various stages of restoration —soaking in alkaline baths, drying, being straightened or treated for mold.

Mowery shares a townhouse on Capitol Hill with his financial analyst wife, Cindy, 27. He unwinds by riding his bicycle and reading—but mostly current novels, not Shakespeare. □

Capital Culture *Is Coming Of Age*

By Joanne Sheehy Hoover

Sunday, March 30, 1980

THE WASHINGTON POST

AFTER TWO DECADES of steady growth, Washington is entering a new stage in its cultural development—and earning a new reputation both in New York and around the country.

Following a long period broken only by the contributions of such wealthy patrons as Andrew Mellon, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and Gertrude Clarke Whittall—contributions that were more national than local in focus—the capital began to join in the arts expansion developing around the country in the '60s. One after another, new museums opened—the National Portrait Gallery, the National Collection of Fine Arts in the '60s, the Hirshhorn and the East Building in the '70s. In 1971 the Kennedy Center started its first season.

Though Washington was turning itself into a glittering showplace for the arts, the general view was that the city was doing little in the way of developing its own voice. Apart from the Washington color painters and such isolated efforts as several Arena productions that went to Broadway—"Great White Hope" in 1968, "Moonchildren" in 1972—and the National Symphony's Sunday afternoon New York series, the rest of the country heard little from the city's artists.

Then in the '70s a series of new groups joined the scene—the Folger Theater, the Folger Consort, Contemporary Music Forum, New Playwrights and 20th Century Consort, to name only a few. Washington was, indeed, reaching toward a further cultural maturity.

Finally, within the last couple of years, Washington artists have aggressively moved out to the New York and national scene, prompted in large part by economics. The lack of a large corporate community and limited availability of either city or federal funding have forced groups to seek opportunities outside the city if they want to continue their artistic growth.

"There's been a period of proliferation of groups, and they're all reaching a level of maturity at the same time," said Christopher Kendall of the Folger Consort. The increased credibility of the Washington cultural scene, he added, "has gone hand in hand with the groups as they grow and develop. They serve both as an indicator and a cause in the city's developing reputation."

At the same time that Washington groups are reaching out, outside groups are clamoring to perform here. Jim Murtha of Gurtman and Murtha, a New York firm of press representatives whose clients have included Claudio Arrau and Vladimir Horowitz, spoke of the Kennedy Center as "looming over the cultural life in America. It's mentioned all the time since the president goes and there are national telecasts."

"Carnegie Hall used to be the international house," added Murtha. "That kind of acceptance has come to the Kennedy Center within the last few years."

"Washington was always an important tour city," said Patrick Hayes, managing director of the Washington Performing Arts Society. "Now it is an absolute must."

For its current tour, the Los Angeles Chamber Ensemble, which played at the Kennedy Center recently, insisted on having a particularly strong soloist—Russian emigre pianist Bella Davidovich—in only two places—Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. The ensemble is using other soloists everywhere else.

"Washington was always an important tour city. Now it is an absolute must . . ."

"We would probably not bring major artists from abroad without booking them into Washington," said Harold Shaw, who directs a large artists-management firm in New York. "It can be a problem when there are four or five groups wanting to go to Washington on the same day. In the past there was a way of throwing up one's hands and saying, 'Well, there's only Lisner and it's already booked—you can't do that anymore.'

"I've seen Washington change from being a dismal city to take anything that had quality to being a marvelous, marvelous place to play," said New York producer Robert Whitehead, who has brought such productions as "A Texas Trilogy" and "No Man's Land" to the Kennedy Center. "I toured a lot in the '50s and '60s," he said. "At the idea of doing two weeks there your heart sank. Nowadays it's generally five weeks. There's only really three cities—Toronto, Washington and Los Angeles—where you can stay that long with some kind of security. These are the three most significant bookings in the country by far [outside New York]."

All three cities moved into this position during the past decade primarily as the result of a new building or, in the case of Toronto, an old building newly renovated.

"The Kennedy Center focused on the arts in such a big way and spectacular way that it galvanized the public into paying attention to the arts in a very special way," said Whitehead. "The audience has changed as well," he added. "Their priorities are tougher than they were 10 years ago. In the beginning taste was secondary to the occasion. The occasion—that is, the play—is now the thing."

Many feel that benefits from the Kennedy Center have spilled over to local performers. "People tend to identify a city in terms of what cultural institutions exist," explained Alan Marks, a New York musician and former director of a contemporary music series at the 92nd Street "Y." "The fact that a lot of New York groups have been playing there [at the Kennedy Center] and National Public Radio has broadcast from there gives a lot more credibility to the scene and so musicians coming from the city are apt to be viewed with more interest."

"There was no question but that we were viewed as a group of national interest," said Dina Kosten of the Theater Chamber Players, referring to the ensemble's tours around the country. "In most of the places we played newspapers talked about the group as the Kennedy Center's resident ensemble."

The Kennedy Center is, of course, not the only Washington institution that lends its luster to performers. The New York Times review of the Folger Consort's recent debut in New York began with a reference to the "distinguished scholarly institution" that houses the ensemble, the Folger Shakespeare Library.

In considering the possibility of taking on the Consort as clients, Gutman and Murtha also took note of the institutional connection. "The fact that the Folger Library would put the group in residence was one sign of arrival, of professionalism in itself," said Murtha.

Buoyed by the growing cultural prominence of their capital as well as their own maturation, Washington groups are now approaching New York with a more confident attitude.

Under the Smithsonian umbrella, the Smithsonian Jazz Repertory Ensemble, The Smithsonian Chamber Players and the 20th Century Consort have joined forces this season to present a New York series, which marks the debut there of each ensemble. "We don't feel particularly humble about going to the big city," said James Morris, director of performing arts at the Smithsonian. "One does go play in New York at a certain period, but we didn't go with hat in hand saying, 'Aw, shucks, I hope they like us.'

"Years ago Washington was not a music-making center," added Morris. "You had to validate your shit out of town. That's no longer true. We were coming to New York as already-established performance groups with successful recordings. We wanted to play for the New York audience, but we were not dependent upon it for our livelihood."

Critical acceptance in New York is, and probably always will be, crucial in generating wider touring opportunities and, in the case of music groups, recording possibilities as well. What is of interest, as far as Washington is concerned, is the constellation of groups from the city currently active on the New York and, in several cases, the national scene.

The Folger Consort made its debut in New York last month. In January, the Theater Chamber Players, with a New York debut and a Carnegie Hall debut (this past December) behind them, opened the first of a three-concert series at the 92nd Street "Y." It is significant to note that the series was scheduled at the request of the "Y." In the fall, the Contemporary Music Forum will enter the New York scene with a concert at Symphony Space.

The Washington Ballet is scheduled to make its New York area debut this fall at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts. And New Playwrights' Theater, established eight years ago for the development of original plays, will have more of its plays produced around the country, including two in New York, than were done during the entire previous five-year period.

Three months ago, three plays associated with Arena Stage were running on Broadway. Two of them, "The 1940s Radio Hour" and "Loose Ends," originated at Arena and the third, "Teibele and Her Demon," received further development after originating at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.

The Folger Theater is actively trying to send more of its shows around the country and currently plans to tour its production of "Macbeth" as far west as Kalamazoo and Kansas City. The Theater Chamber Players already has made two national tours and plans a third next year. All of the groups associated with the Smithsonian New York series plan to tour next year.

With this fluorescence of activity, many observers would like to see Washington assume a special role within the nation that more nearly resembles that of other political capitals.

"The biggest question facing Washington is what image do its cultural leaders want for the nation's capital and can they afford it under the current system," said New York artists-management director, Harold Shaw.

"Washington, D.C., has to receive funds from the federal government, whereas the New York Philharmonic and Buffalo and Rochester can get substantial chunks of the state budget as well as NEA funds," Shaw said. "Is the nation's capital going to be short-changed imagewise because it doesn't have the privileges granted to some of the other states?"

"I think Congress in general underestimates how every private citizen feels about the nation's capital and how proud he is of it. Congressmen have to consider not just what they want to do after they go home at night, but what people across the country want their nation's capital to have," added Shaw. "If you scratch someone really deeply in this country, I believe he would say that if we're going to have museums and orchestras and ballet companies at all, the best ought to be in our nation's capital."

Few dispute that New York, given its population size, will remain the nation's standard-bearer. Instead of aspiring to that burden, Washington may well find its fulfillment in winning the country's heart.

A review

'Love Letters' are a hymn to life

LOVE LETTERS ON BLUE PAPER. A play by Arnold Wesker. Directed by Kenneth Frankel. Produced by the Folger Theatre Group (Washington, D. C.) and presented at the Annenberg School Theatre, Philadelphia, through April 6.

By ERNEST SCHIER
Bulletin Drama Critic

A man who has spent his life as an enlightened union official lies dying of cancer. His wife of 40 years goes about her household routines silently. A valued friend comes by faithfully to spend a little time each day at the bedside in a vigil of farewell.

Out of this personal sadness and the imminence of death, Arnold Wesker has forged a short, lyrical drama that rings with affirmation.

"Love Letters On Blue Paper" is a passionate hymn to life, to the human ability to love and to mankind's unique capacity to think. It is a play written with an underlying

sense of urgency that glows with confidence, qualities that are transmitted by the small, splendid cast to us, the audience.

As Victor, the dying man, and Maurice, a college professor, talk of ideas, of art, of the frailty of men, of philosophy, the wife is only capable of expressing herself in letters that she leaves on the living room desk.

But what letters! They are filled with vigor and happiness and the fulfilling love she has felt virtually from the beginning of their marriage. In the midst of death, the letters sing, there is life.

She recalls her awe of him, her wonder at his sensitivity toward her, how he helped their children grow out into the world, how he led her to become herself, encouraging her to grow well beyond the roles of wife and mother.

If the letters suggest an ideal almost too big for reality they carry a fervor that are convincing. But there



Tresa Hughes and Ralph Cosham in a scene from Arnold Wesker's haunting love story, "Love Letters on Blue Paper."

is also the man himself, nearly burned out as his strength fades but still thinking, talking and weighing the possibilities of the things that interest him: Ruskin (naturally, for a working class advocate) and the idea of a spiritual life after death.

Amusingly, he takes comfort, as all mortal men do, in knowing that Da Vinci and Shakespeare, have gone before him. He rails against death as a waste and a rotten idea.

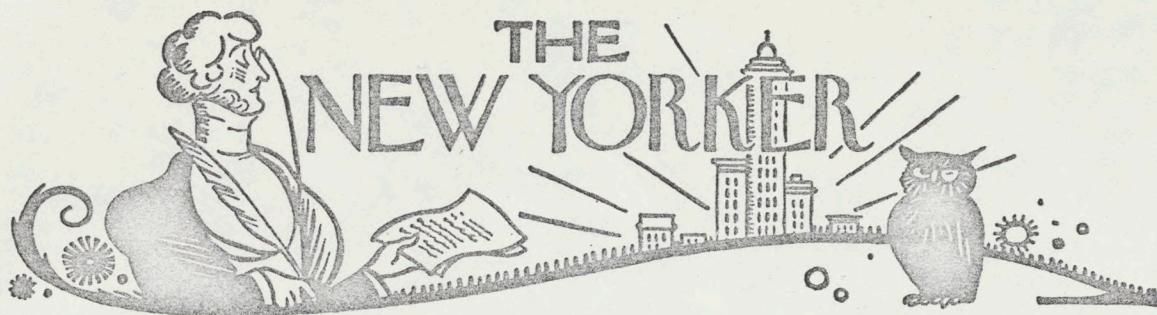
But always the play comes back to the wife, to the rich performance of Tresa Hughes, in the voice over style that reveals the earlier form of "Love Letters On Blue Paper" as a play for radio. This is a weakness but the drama gathers force as it

moves triumphantly toward something more than the ending: It arrives at understanding.

"Love Letters On Blue Paper" covers that vast area of human experience bounded on one side by the feeling nature of the wife, on the other by the thinking husband.

The play has the ring of a credo, Wesker's "this I believe" but it also has a balancing sweetness. It is a rational man's love letter to life performed by a cast that, in addition to Miss Hughes, gains a remarkable performance from William Myers, as the dying man who refuses to go gently into that dark night, and a sympathetic performance, as the friend by, Ralph Cosham.

MARCH 3, 1980



MUSICAL EVENTS

The Folger Consort is an exceptionally well-organized, cheerful group of players (and one singer), resident at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Unlike many other groups that specialize in medieval music, this consort wears a neat uniform—black tie and a flower in the buttonhole—and smiles when it comes onto the platform, and knows what it is going to play next. Its program spanned “Three Centuries of German Music”—regrettable, I feel, to cast the net so wide in the search for novelty. I have heard a whole evening based on the fascinating music of the early-fifteenth-century Minnesinger Oswald von Wolkenstein. This program started with a group of his songs (a couple of them performed instrumentally) but, just as we were becoming used to the remarkable intensity of both his words and his music, moved on a century, to Senfl and Hofheimer, and then on to Schein and Scheidt. The Consort plays skillfully. There is none of the emphasis on the sheer oddity and variety of medieval instruments which can be so distracting in these presentations. David Gordon is a light, lyrical tenor who blends excellently with the playing, even if he lacks a desirable hard edge to his voice. Ludwig Senfl's setting of the Seven Last Words from the Cross, “Da Jesus an dem Kreuze hieng,” made a curious long interpolation in a program of short, mostly secular miniatures, but its contrapuntal elaboration was beautifully realized.

The Washington Post

By Michael Kieran

Take the Case of the Third Murderer.

It happens in "Macbeth." The tyrant has hired two murderers to kill Banquo, and at the last minute they are joined by a shadowy third man.

"But who did bid thee join with us?" they ask, as the scene opens in midconversation.

"Macbeth," the man replies.

Some scholars believe this is Macbeth himself, come to make sure the job is done right. Others think that's unlikely because Macbeth later talks to the two killers and seems unaware of what happened. According to this theory, the Third Murderer was sent by Macbeth in his paranoia to check on the first two.

"I've actually seen it done that way," said Sebastian Shaw, a 74-year-old veteran of the Royal Shakespeare Company. "It's an interesting idea."

Shaw and four other British actors are here through March 8 to teach and talk and maybe run through a scene or two for a remarkable program sponsored by the Folger Institute of Renaissance and 18th Century Studies. They will be taking up just such riddles as the classic of the Third Murderer.

As actors in residence—an idea now in its seventh year—they are leading workshops and seminars for teachers at all levels, and they're lecturing at

Shades of The Bard Variety Is His Spice

Theater



Sebastian Shaw, by Linda Wheeler

the Kennedy Center and the Library of Congress.

One particular area they will explore is that hazy frontier between scholarship and acting.

"Every role can be played in 101 different ways," remarked Shaw, whose acting credits run to three solid columns in "Who's Who in the Theater." "And styles change constantly. If you knew how Shakespeare's actors played the parts, you'd be a great actor."

He laughed to recall his own version of Romeo, vintage 1936, in which he more or less sang the Balcony Scene. The fashion then was to view Romeo as a lyric poet (One remembers Leslie Howard's screen Romeo of that year.). The modern Romeo is more boyish, less consciously articulate.

Aside from the programs for high-school teachers and elementary-school children, the seminars will reach graduate students, university teachers and scholars, and there will be these public events:

"Ariel: Shakespeare's Sweet Power and Music" is tonight at 8. "Shakespeare and the Actors" is Tuesday at the same time. "Murder Most Foul" is Thursday, and "Ariel" will be repeated March 8, all at the Library of Congress' Coolidge Auditorium.

Homer Swander of the University

See SHAKESPEARE, B2, Col. 1

Shades of Shakespeare

SHAKESPEARE, From B1
of California had the scheme for this rapprochement of the academy and the theater. It is peculiarly apt for Shakespeare, who for most Americans is notoriously opaque when read but who comes gloriously alive when acted well.

And the British seem to have a corner on making Shakespeare sing. People are always asking why this is.

"You can be taught certain skills," said Shaw, who studied at the Royal Academy; "movement, dancing, sword fighting, how to handle your body, control. But nobody can teach you to act. It's a gift."

Of course we all act, in a way, he pointed out. But managing it on cue is another thing. The Briton's respect for the language may have something to do with it, too.

Shaw, a doctor's son from Norfolk,

started out at age 5 at the Court Theater. He knows all about child actors.

"My daughter was in a school play," he said, getting up to act it out. He showed her glaring over the footlights, transfixed, while the teacher whispered hoarsely from the wings. "Finally she said in a very firm voice, 'I don't think I'll do it.' And stomped offstage."

Shaw retired at 7, tried his hand as a painter, returned to the stage and the Royal Academy as a teen-ager.

"There was a poor fat boy just enrolled, and we thought, too bad, it's a shame. But in about two days we stopped feeling sorry for him. It was Charles Laughton."

Shaw went on to play everything from Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw to a number called "A Lass and a Lackey." He is still at it, and he's written a play himself, "The

Cliff Walk."

"Actors take themselves onstage, and they absorb themselves into the character, and the character into themselves, and they give you that. It doesn't always work. It's rubbish to say any actor can play any part. At the very least, a fat man can't play a thin one."

He is looking forward to the jam session on "Hamlet," shared by the actors and the academics.

"We'll discuss what it's about and what the choices are and how the people interrelate. And then we'll do a scene, maybe the Nunnery Scene, when all the people are there, Hamlet, Ophelia, Polonius and everybody."

"And we'll discuss it some more, and argue, and read the lines one more time . . . and then finally we'll throw our books away and let go and just do the bloody thing."

The New York Times

—NEW YORK, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1980—



Christian Steiner

The Folger Consort. From left: Robert Eisenstein, bassist; Scott Reiss, recorder player; Ann Monoyios, soprano, and Christopher Kendall, lutist.

Folger Consort Offers German Music Program

The Folger Shakespeare Library is a distinguished scholarly institution in Washington devoted chiefly, as its name implies, to Shakespeare. But its interests are not limited solely to Shakespeare and literature, and an excellent music ensemble is in residence. It is called the Folger Consort, and Wednesday it made its New York debut in the first of three concerts it is giving this season at the Goodman Concert Hall.

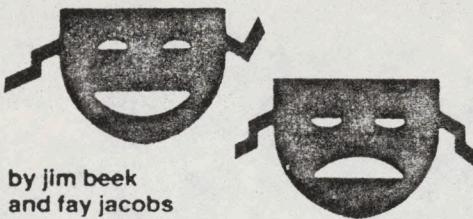
The title of the program, "Three Centuries of German Music," was hardly beguiling, but the content and music-making were compelling from start to finish. Oswald von Wolkenstein (c. 1377-1445), described as "the last Minnesingers," was represented by an extended group of songs; the late 15th-century Glogauer Lieberbuch was sampled; items by Sennfl, Walther, Hofheimer and Fincke were included; and the postintermission period was given over to music by Scheidt, Schein and Valentin Haussmann.

Although some of the works were performed in instrumental versions by the six expert players of recorders, vielles, lute, harp, Renaissance wind instruments, harpsichord and so on, most of the program was vocal, with the singing done beautifully by David Gordon, tenor. Mr. Gordon sat in the midst of the instrumentalists and sang in modest fashion, but his German diction was so clear and his projection of mood and meaning so telling in both sacred and bawdy works that every song became a vivid entity.

All in all, the striking thing about the ensemble was that it presented what can easily seem to be dusty material with a naturalness and enthusiasm that made it seem as vital as today.

ALLEN HUGHES

On Stage



by jim beek
and fay jacobs

A local theater company that offers fixes of Shakespeare regular enough to be addicting is part of my platonic conception of how things ought to be—right up there with the idea that trains ought to be pulled by steam locomotives and persons wearing pink hair curlers on the street ought to be subject to at least the same criminal penalties as jaywalkers. In Washington at least I am getting my way in one category out of three, because Folger Theatre Group's fantastically frequent forays into the works of The Bard are beyond even Plato's conception of what's Good.

For ten years the Folger Theatre Group on Capitol Hill has been giving Washingtonians and anyone else fortunate enough to encounter them a stunning polarity of what the best is in theater. I say polarity because they balance their seasons with the works of Shakespeare... ones we are very familiar with as well as those we most often see only in the Table of Contents of a collection of his plays... while at the other pole are some very original and entertaining new plays by new playwrights. Shakespeare would have approved. After all, there was a time when he was breaking into the business too.

Sandy Faison as Libby Custer, and Tom Blair as the infamous general of the same name starred in the Folger Theater Group production Custer, earlier this season at the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater.

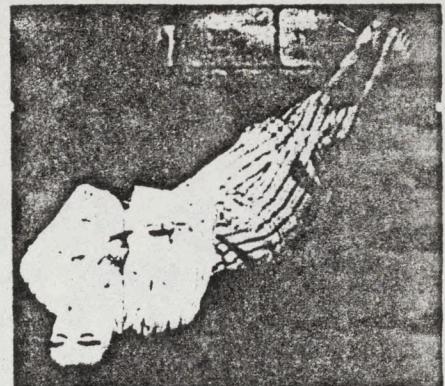


30 February, 1980 FORECAST!

Folger Theatre Group offers polarity of another sort too. Their productions occur in both the oldest and newest of settings. One of these is the Folger Shakespeare Library's elegant reproduction of an Elizabethan theater, which FTG was brought into being to animate. Their newest showcase is the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, a medium sized auditorium tucked away upstairs of the mammoth Eisenhower. Both of these settings are extraordinary, and what the FTG does to fill them is none the less so.

... that elegant period that
featured wenching, duels
and other things that make
life worthwhile.

Twelfth Night, R&J, The Winter's Tale, a version of Love's Labours Lost with music, some Henry plays and Richard III and a Midsummer Night's Dream are just the majority of the plays



Jack Taylor portrays Renfield experiencing a fit of delirium in the Lazy Susan Dinner Theatre production of Dracula.

produced since FTG has been in commission to make the Folger a living memorial to the world's greatest dramatist—not just another shrine to his folios.

In the middle ground FTG has exhibited the work of such established moderns as Beckett, Pinter, Gogol and John O'Keefe. But the work of today's generation of playwrights gets as serious treatment at the hands of FTG as do the plays of the most revered. Sergei's *Black Elk Speaks*, David Sotry's *The Farm*, and *Creeps* by David Freeman have been among the distinguished contemporary productions. FTG has done itself proud by a consistent appearance of world and American premieres of such works over the decade it has been around.

FTG is one of the many theater groups in Washington that has a "theater in schools" program—something that can be called an investment in the future by its cultivation of young audiences. Productions which are signed for the hearing-impaired are, as far as I know, a unique innovation of FTG's part. In addition to training young audiences, they also train young actors through an excellent internship program.

The great successes of this past season have been Robert Ingham's *Custer*, an evocation as haunting and ironic an evocation of that historical figure as was the Tony Richardson film on the charge of the light brigade. John O'Keefe's *Wild Oats* was a restoration from the Restoration, a little known work from that elegant period that featured wenching, duels and other things that make life worthwhile. If for nothing else, it was worth it to come across a character with one of the all time great names—Harry Thunder!

Love Letters on Blue Paper by Arnold Wesker will be FTG's February offering at the Folger, and *Charlie and Algernon*, a musical will be on at the Terrace in March. *Taming of The Shrew* and *Twelfth Night* are the remaining Shakespearean offerings for this season.

In a time when fewer and fewer people are making a real attempt at quality, this company is doing its best to find the finest—and going beyond The Globe to achieve it. — J.B. □

The *Lazy Susan Dinner Theatre* has gone bats! For *Dracula*, that is. Roland Chambers is starring as the sensual Count Dracula in the play of the same name. It's dining dinner theater fare, given a stunning production. Roland directs and stagehands the cat on well. He has a



JOAN MARCUS

John Neville-Andrews and Ralph Cosham in John O'Keeffe's "Wild Oats" at the Folger Theater in Washington.

Theater: Return Of Comic 'Wild Oats'

By MEL GUSSOW

WE'RE anyone to ask what plays I would like to take with me to a desert island, high on the list would be John O'Keeffe's "Wild Oats." However, in order to feel the full flavor of this rollicking 18th-century romance one would have to be accompanied by a troupe of actors, either the Royal Shakespeare Company or the company that Leonard Peters has put together for the current revival of the play at the Folger Theater Group. "Wild Oats" is not so much an emotion to be recollected in tranquillity as a live performance by a merry band of players.

I have now seen three productions of "Wild Oats," at the R.S.C., New York's C.S.C., and the Folger, and each time the comedy seems as fresh as it is familiar. One laughs aloud at the convoluted escapades of the rogue hero, Jack Rover, and it is impossible not to become misty-eyed at the golden-hued denouement. This is a play in which someone is always staking his or her life on someone else's innocence, in which the righteous are wronged until the end when every single wrong is righted.

Lord Williams's R.S.C. production, a rediscovery of this popular classic after years of neglect, gave Alan Howard his finest role as Jack Rover. Christopher Martin's C.S.C. production last season proved that the play was foolproof fun. Mr. Peters's version in our nation's capital is, in a word, capital.

A Merry Band

WILD OATS, by John O'Keeffe; director, Leonard Peters; composer, William Penn; scenic designer, Russell Metheny; costume designer, Hilary A. Sherrard; lighting designer, Richard Winkler; production stage manager, Elizabeth Hamilton; presented by the Folger Theater Group, Louis W. Scheeder, producer. At Washington.

Sir George Thunder	Ralph Cosham
Rover	John Neville-Andrews
Harry Thunder	Eric Zwemer
Banks	Ray Aranha
John Dory	Richard Mathews
Farmer Gammon	Moultrie Patton
Lamp	Michael Gabel
Ephraim Smooth	Kenneth Gray
Sim	John Gilliss
Zachariah	David Cromwell
Muz	Philip McMahon
Trap	Mark Basile
Twitch	Jim Beard
Walter and Third Ruffian	Henry Fonte
Landlord	Carlos Juan Gonzalez
First Ruffian	Marc Lee Adams
Second Ruffian	Lou Dickey
Lady Amaranth	Cara Duff-MacCormick
Amelia	Mikel Lambert
Jane	Glynis Bell
Maid	Karen Bayly

The Folger's woodhewn Elizabethan stage, embellished by Russell Metheny's simple rustic design, is a perfect place for "Wild Oats," and John Neville-Andrews is an inspired choice to play Rover. He is a comic hero, an itinerant actor as well as a "strolling gentleman" as in the work's subtitle. He is in and out of mischief, and when he is struck by love for the Quaker heiress, Lady Amaranth, he is smitten. It is a thunderbolt from the skies and it almost flattens him to the floor. Mr. Neville-Andrews accents the clownish side of the character, but he does not ignore Rover's impulsive sense of good will and his headstrong romantic inclinations. As a traveling actor, Rover has memorized a folio of Shakespeare. His dialogue is riddled with borrowings from the Bard, as adapted for his own

uses — for flattery, for insults, to fill in the spaces.

It is Mr. Neville-Andrews's clever notion to imitate the characters that he is quoting. A line from "Hamlet," and suddenly he is melancholy. A random sampling from "Richard III," and, reflexively, a hump appears on his back. The actor never misses a trick, and occasionally he draws a trump card. When a companion, wondering about his relationship with Lady Amaranth, asks him, "Do you love her?" Mr. Neville-Andrews pauses as if lost in thought, then suddenly snaps to attention and offers the author's line, "To distraction!"

With his angular features and madcap grin, the actor looks and reacts just a bit like a fugitive from a *Monte Python* show, convincingly demonstrating that John O'Keeffe and his strolling players may have been antecedents to the mirthful mania of these contemporary English satirists. Certainly the plot is as twisted and labyrinthine as in any modern lampoon.

Once we catch the drift, we are Mr. O'Keeffe's confidantes. We are swept away in a Sargasso Sea of devilish duplicity: we know that she knows but he doesn't yet know. Rover's long-lost mother's rodomontade recapitulation of her entire biography — love, abandonment, loss of child, destitution — takes about two minutes. Mikel Lambert delivers the history without pausing for a breath, as if she is a woman possessed. She seems taken by surprise by the story's conclusion. With justification, the audience breaks into applause.

Under Mr. Peters's direction, the principals strike the right balance between total immersion and self-mockery. Cara Duff-MacCormick is a charming Lady Amaranth. She even makes the woman's sense of propriety — actors are "profane stage players" — until she meets one — seem honorable and humorous.

Ralph Cosham is properly stormy as the aging Sir George Thunder and Richard Mathews is craftily in character as his artful valet. Kenneth Gray is a villainous Ephraim Smooth. Glynis Bell and John Gilliss elicit smiles as two ingenuous farm youngsters with a habit of calling their father "feyther." Each time the word "feyther" is uttered, it is a laughline, as is "Abra-wang," that name that Rover misapplies to old Sir George, and turns into a twanging insult. Sir George has one of the play's most O'Keeffian lines. Confronted with his own deceitful wild-voiced youth, the abashed Sir George regrets: "The worm of remorse has since gnawed my timbers."

The climax of "Wild Oats" is like a crazy quilt of Shakespearean mistaken identity. True identities tumble with dizzying speed. Hypocrites are unmasked, villains exposed, lost sons and mothers reunited, prodigal fathers redeemed, paradise regained. "Wild Oats" is a splendidiferous comedy.

+ 300

TOWN & COUNTRY

Vol. 133 No. 4994/October 1979

The American Treasury of the English-Speaking Heritage

The Folger Shakespeare Library

By Selwa Roosevelt

John D. Rockefeller Sr. was very upset. It was 1919, and for most Americans, a time of postwar austerity. He was playing golf with Henry Clay Folger, a man whom he had appointed president of the Standard Oil Company of New York.

"Henry," he said, "I see from the papers that you just paid \$100,000 for a book!"

A gentle, unostentatious man, Henry Folger was quietly, almost secretively, amassing one of the greatest book collections in the world, but he wasn't about to admit his latest caprice to his boss.

"Now, John, you know better than anyone how newspapers exaggerate. If you buy something for \$10,000, it becomes \$100,000 in print," Folger replied.

Hesitant to pursue the matter further, Rockefeller answered, "Well, I'm glad to hear you say that, Henry. We—that is, my son and I and the board of directors—were disturbed. We wouldn't want to think that the president of one of our major companies would be foolish enough to pay \$100,000 for a book."

But Henry Clay Folger was indeed "foolish enough" to spend that—for a unique 1619 quarto volume containing nine Shakespeare plays—and much more. In all, a total of \$15 million (when a million was real money) was spent on the collection he left as a gift to the nation in 1930, along with the impressive building on Capitol Hill to house it.

Today, that collection forms the heart of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., a treasure-trove conservatively valued at over a half-billion dollars and, without question, one of America's richest cultural resources. In fact, the Folger and London's British Museum are the two greatest repositories of the English-speaking heritage in the world.

Nonetheless, if you ask even highly educated and sophisticated Americans about the Folger, few can tell you what goes on inside that handsome Art Deco building next door to the Library of Congress. To remedy this—and mindful of the fantastic success of the Tutankhamun exhibit—the trustees of the Folger Library have con-

sented to the first national traveling exhibition of its treasures. Included will be one of the most precious books in the world: a presentation copy of a Shakespeare First Folio, untrimmed and in the original binding. Coming at a time when interest in Shakespeare is at a new high, the exhibition coincides with the ambitious BBC project to film the thirty-seven Shakespeare plays, some of which have already been shown on American television.

This elaborately designed exhibition opens in San Francisco on October 5, and continues on to Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Dallas and Atlanta, ending in New York in 1981. On view will be rare books, manuscripts, prints, paintings, sculptures, costumes, playbills, films and other items illustrating Shakespeare's life and the world of Elizabethan England.

When Henry Clay Folger died in 1930, no one had any idea of the extent of his collection. Indeed, only two years earlier, the Librarian of Congress, Herbert Putnam, was dining with the director of the British Museum, who commented how rarely in recent years a Shakespeare First Folio came on the market. (The First Folio, the *ne plus ultra* of all collectors, is the compilation of all Shakespeare's plays—except *Pericles*—in one volume, dated 1623, and without which many of his plays would have been lost to posterity.)

"I'm told that Mr. Folger has managed to acquire five First Folios," Putnam told his British colleague.

"Oh, quite impossible," said the startled Englishman. "The British Museum has only five!"

But when the 3,000 enormous packing cases housing Folger's collection were finally opened and catalogued, he had not five, but *seventy-nine* First Folios! In addition, he had collected fifty-seven Second Folios (1632), twenty-three Third Folios (1663-64) and thirty-six Fourth Folios (1685). In only forty years, Folger had put together what no one else has been able to do before or since and, in the process, provided a bonanza for Shakespearean scholars.

That was just the beginning. The Folger bequest included 208 quartos: small volumes of Shakespeare's plays and verse, for the most part predating the First Folios. The paperbacks of their time, and very perishable, they were in fact the earliest editions of various plays. The most notable in the Folger collection is the only surviving quarto of *Titus Andronicus* (1594). But the Folger gift did not ignore the other great names of the time: Bacon, Marlowe, Spenser, Donne and Ben Jonson. Everything to do with the Elizabethan period was collected, even costumes which included a corset that allegedly belonged to Queen Elizabeth.

The final inventory totaled more than 90,000 rare books, 50,000 prints, watercolors and engravings, 200 oil paintings, 250,000 playbills of Shakespeare productions, and costumes and memorabilia of such great actors as David Garrick, Fanny Kemble, Julia Marlowe and Edwin Booth. Also received were thousands of prompt books as well as stage designs, from which one can reconstruct the way in which the plays were done at any period.

A man of relatively modest beginnings whose English forebears settled in Nantucket in 1635, Henry Clay Folger's story is as romantic as the American Dream, although not strictly rags to riches. Folger's ancestors included the mother of Benjamin Franklin, and a branch of the family that went West in the 1850s and founded the Folger Coffee Company. However, Henry's immediate family stayed in the East, and he was born in Brooklyn in 1857, the son of a moderately prosperous New York merchant. The senior Folger lost his money in the crash of 1876, just when Henry was a student at Amherst College. Faced with having to leave school for lack of funds, he was saved by his roommate, Charles M. Pratt, whose father later went into business with John D. Rockefeller Sr.

"You are like a son to us," the elder Pratt told Henry, "so we will finance your educa-



The Tudor reading room of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., is the scene of an annual benefit gala attended by the capital's luminaries in Elizabethan costume. Some of the Folger's most enthusiastic supporters include, left to right, front row: Mrs. Eric Weinmann, whose husband is chairman of the Friends of the Folger; Mrs. George Angus Garrett, Mrs. Hugh D. Auchincloss and Mrs. Francis Lecompte Spalding. In back row: Mrs. Maurice B. Tobin, Mrs. Leo Daly III and Mrs. Chisholm Lindsey.

Town & Country

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tion, and, after graduation, you will have a job with the Pratt Company if you want it."

In Henry's senior year in college he chanced to hear a lecture by Ralph Waldo Emerson. Folger was so impressed that afterwards he read Emerson's enthusiastic essay on Shakespeare; thus began the love of a lifetime. Soon after graduation, Folger married and was singularly prescient in his choice of a wife. Well-born, Vassar-educated Emily Jordan Folger brought no financial resources to their marriage, but she brought something more precious—a scholar's devotion to Shakespearean study. (She later wrote a master's thesis on the First Folio.)

John Fleming, a leading New York book dealer, says: "Although Folger was a dedicated scholar, his career and fame were made possible by the single-minded dedication of his strong, scholarly wife. No serious decisions were taken unless they both concurred."

Adds Dr. O. B. Hardison, the genial, pipe-smoking director of the Folger Library, "Certainly, it was a perfect marriage between two people who poured equal amounts of passion into this collection. They had no children. Both tended to shun social life, and, for forty-five years, they collaborated in the pursuit of their truly 'magnificent obsession.'"

The early twentieth century was the heyday of legendary American collectors. And they did their collecting in style—staying at the most luxurious hotels and moving about in magnificent coaches. When these millionaires went abroad on shopping expeditions they might just as well have sent heralds and trumpeters to proclaim their arrival. While these tycoons did their collecting in full view, the Folgers went to the other extreme. Every summer for eleven years they booked passage on a freighter and arrived in England virtually incognito, staying at modest hotels. Totally indifferent to elegance and fanfare, they seemed, to all outward appearances, a frumpy, bookish, middle-aged couple.

The Folgers were very secretive about their purchases and always paid cash to get better bargains and avoid tell-tale records. Also, they often used agents to make their purchases. Mrs. Folger spent days pouring over catalogs, checking off items and discussing what to pay for each. Afterwards, each purchase was painstakingly recorded in an account book. The Folgers' Yankee blood ran strong, and it offended them to pay more than was absolutely necessary.

Folger's first purchase, in 1889, was a copy of the Fourth Folio for \$107.50, which he elected to pay in installments. By the 1900s his collection was formidable, but because of his secrecy, no one knew what

books he had. One dealer remarked, "If I could only find out what books Folger does not have I could become the richest man in the book trade."

In 1904, in notes to his Amherst class, Folger mentions that he and his wife had no children, that he had done fairly well in the petroleum industry and that he had begun a Shakespeare collection, which one day might be notable. For him, this admission verged on braggadocio, but actually, by 1904 he had already made the most exciting purchase of his entire collection, the *Titus Andronicus* quarto. He had first learned of the quarto's existence after reading a newspaper account of its discovery in a Swedish postal clerk's attic. Immediately he dispatched an agent from London to Sweden to buy it. The agent cabled back, "How much are you willing to pay?"

Folger deliberated for three hours and cabled his answer: "Two thousand pounds" (\$10,000). Meanwhile, other dealers had gotten into the act, but Folger's man arrived first, with cash in hand, so he was given preference. Within days after Folger's deft purchase, offers poured in ranging up to ten times the amount he paid.

Folger's persistence and acumen were again revealed when he learned of a fine collection of quartos belonging to the Bishop of Truro in England. He ordered his London agent to go to Truro, examine the books and get an option to buy. The dealer replied that without a letter of introduction he could not hope to see the books of a Bishop, let alone be granted an interview. This didn't satisfy Folger, who told the agent: "Send someone to sit on the Bishop's doorstep until he is admitted. . . . In America such obstacles would be treated lightly or ignored."

At first the dealer refused, but after more prodding he found a way to see the books and pronounced them "superb." Folger then made a generous offer by cable; it was accepted, and the Bishop's son-in-law delivered the volumes to the dealer who paid cash on the spot, as Folger had urged. This was on a Friday afternoon. "Early Saturday morning the venerable Bishop passed on to his reward," writes Folger. "A few hours delay would have prevented the transfer of the books and their acquisition would have become almost impossible."

Folger also was a formidable and aggressive businessman. Through the Pratt family he got his start in the oil business and

eventually became a director of Standard Oil. Then, after Theodore Roosevelt broke up the Standard Oil trust, John D. Rockefeller hand-picked Folger to run Standard Oil of New York (today, Mobile Oil).

"Folger's quieter business ventures are equally impressive," says Dr. James Elder, the dynamic young deputy assistant to Dr. Hardison. "Recently, when I was visiting Miss Nina Cullinan in Texas, I happened to leaf through a biography of her father, J. S. Cullinan, and saw the phrase 'Texas owes a great obligation to Henry Clay Folger.' Naturally, this surprised me, for I never heard that Folger had had anything to do with Texas."

When oil was discovered in Texas, Cullinan, who had once worked for Folger, was one of the few with the experience and knowledge to exploit it. No bank in Texas would touch it, so Cullinan went to Folger who agreed to finance privately what later became the Texas Company (Texaco). Folger also helped finance the first natural gas pipeline company in Texas.

"The fortune he made from these ventures was never publicly known," says Dr. Elder. "For years, the Folgers lived in a modest flat in Brooklyn. They felt they couldn't afford a proper house or place to display their collection. When books arrived, they would look them over, enjoy them momentarily, check them off the list, pack them into crates and send them off to bonded warehouses. Folger never saw them again; he died before the building that bears his name was completed."

Folger had considered leaving his collection to Amherst or to Stratford-on-Avon, Shakespeare's birthplace in England. In the end, he decided Washington was the most appropriate home for his gift and negotiated for the piece of land next to the Library of Congress. Originally he wanted to construct a half-timbered building in the Elizabethan tradition, but that was out of step with the architecture of the area, so finally he compromised. The building, an architectural gem designed by Paul Philippe Cret, has an Art Deco exterior and a Tudor interior, including a great hall and a theater.

Folger gave the building and collection outright to the nation, appointing the trustees of Amherst, his alma mater, its administrators. After Mrs. Folger's death in 1936, the rest of their fortune went to endow the library. This provided sufficient funds until recently, when inflation and recession finally forced the Library to go to the public. To raise money for new acquisitions—about 2,500 titles a year—a gala dinner is held annually in the Library's exhibition hall and reading room, to which the capital's luminaries come in Elizabethan costume. In Washington, a city of parties, the small, glamorous Folger benefit is one of the tru-

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ly top-drawer events.

Major additions to the building are now under construction, for the collection has grown enormously since 1930. The Folger needs \$7.4 million, and toward this goal has received a generous contribution of \$1,250,000 from the Charles A. Dana Foundation, \$500,000 from the Kresge Foundation and \$200,000 from the Hewlett Foundation. Among other contributions, \$1.5 million has come from the trustees, as well as an important \$750,000 challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

"People often assume that we are only a Shakespeare library," explains Dr. Hardison, "but our European and English Renaissance collections are among the finest in the world: for example, we have about a thousand Italian sixteenth-century plays; even the Italian National Library is not as complete.

"America's intellectual roots go back to the Renaissance," he continues. "This is true in fields as diverse as literature, science and politics. Indeed, the concepts of religious freedom and separation of church and state, which emerged in England in the seventeenth-century, profoundly influenced our Constitution. This was also the great age of exploration and discovery, and the Folger has an outstanding collection of early Americana, including the first mention of the New World in print in English. This appears in a 1509 translation of *Ship of Fools*," [a verse allegory by the German humanist, Sebastian Brant.]

In short, any phase of human activity between 1450-1700, be it poetry, drama, religion, medicine, technology, cartography, law, astronomy, zoology, botany or fashion, is covered by the collection Folger created, which was later supplemented by some spectacular acquisitions.

The Harmsworth collection, bought in 1938, was the Library's second great windfall. Sir Leicester Harmsworth, an English newspaper magnate, collected some 9,000 rare books printed in England between 1475 and 1640. When he died, Lady Harmsworth had to sell the collection to pay death duties, but she wanted to keep it intact. Every important library coveted the books, but in the depths of the Depression only two could come up with a cash offer: Harvard and the Folger. Lady Harmsworth decided in favor of the Folger, which bought it *in toto* for £35,000.

"Had Lady Harmsworth chosen to break up the collection and sell it piecemeal over the years, she would have realized a fortune," says Dr. Elder. "But the value of the collection to scholars would have been greatly diminished." Among the highlights of the purchase were several prize examples of the work of William Caxton the

first English printer, and many items tracing the development of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The Folger is also strong in works on the Reformation, thanks especially to a significant purchase in 1977 from the estate of a Swiss industrialist. This collection included 850 books on the Reformation in mint condition, 700 of which were published before 1550, including the first edition of Martin Luther's 95 theses and books illustrated by Dürer and Holbein.

Of course, book values have increased as much as fifty-fold since Folger's day. Even Elizabeth Niemyer, the acquisition librarian of the Folger, has a hard time keeping track and says values have stayed well ahead of the inflation rate.

"Not long ago I was asked to give an off-the-cuff estimate of the value of a 1640 edition of Shakespeare's poems. I guessed around \$5,000. Afterwards, one sold at auction for \$35,000," she said, adding casually that the Folger has ten copies of that particular book.

The most important goal of the Folger is to acquire a copy of every book printed in England (or in English) from the beginning of English printing in 1475 until the Puritan rebellion in 1640. These have been cataloged and include 26,000 titles. Thus far, the Folger owns 19,000 in the original copies and facsimiles of many others.

"One of the most sought after items for any collector is an authentic Shakespeare signature," says Dr. Hardison. "Only six are known to exist and most of those are on his will. The Folger has one that *might* be authentic."

Very little of Shakespeare's handwriting remains, says Dr. Hardison. Shakespeare's own drafts of his plays were turned over to professional scribes to copy into books. The Globe Theater, which housed his acting company, burned in 1613, and with it any original drafts or prompt books which might have been on hand. When the Puritans closed the theaters in 1642, the acting companies disbanded, and any surviving manuscripts probably disappeared then.

When Dr. Hardison took over as director ten years ago, a new epoch began. An attempt was made to make the Library a part of the community and not just a haven for scholars. Dr. Hardison's success is apparent on many fronts. Today, the Folger's professional acting company presents 270 performances a year in its Elizabethan theater; poetry readings include not only Shakespeare, but important contemporary works as well; lectures, symposia and art exhibits fill the calendar; and the Folger Consort, a musical ensemble, presents concerts of medieval, Renaissance and Ba-

roque music. Constantly changing exhibits of the library's treasures are always on view in the Great Hall.

Now the Folger is going national, thanks to the traveling exhibit underwritten by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Exxon Corporation, Metropolitan Life Insurance, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. A conservator will travel with the priceless and delicate objects, and no one else will be allowed to pack or unpack them during the two-year tour.

The exhibition will take visitors on a marvelous journey to sixteenth-century Renaissance England, starting with an evocation of life in rural England where Shakespeare grew up, and moving on to a re-creation of Elizabethan London. The flavor of Elizabeth I's court will be evoked through portraits and illustrations of opulent costumes and jewels. Visitors can look on Queen Elizabeth's own household Bible, bound in rose-colored velvet; a handsomely illuminated prayer book given Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, by Anne of Cleves; and Henry's own copy of the works of Cicero, in which he wrote in bold script, "This book is myne, Prince Henry." Rare atlases covering a period from 1513 to 1595 will be on display, as well as some of the earliest accounts of voyages to the New World.

Visitors will also see a re-creation of London's theater district. This will include six small playhouses, each featuring audio-visual effects and exhibits of books and manuscripts relating to six of Shakespeare's plays. A famous scene from each play will be brought to life through engravings, paintings and photos. Clips from notable film performances will also be included in the exhibition.

The climax of the exhibition will be the presentation of the First Folio and subsequent editions down to the present day, showing that as a cultural phenomenon Shakespeare stands unique. As Ben Jonson wrote in the introduction to the First Folio, "He was not of an age, but for all time." □

May 18, 1979

The Washington Star

A rare tour planned for Folger Shakespeare material

By Boris Weintraub
Washington Star Staff Writer

A major traveling exhibition of many of the rarest items in the Folger Library's collection, the first time such items have been allowed out of the library, will open in October in San Francisco's California Academy of Sciences, the first stop in a six-city tour to conclude in New York in 1981.

The exhibition, called "Shakespeare, the Globe and the World," is being funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Exxon Corp., the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The total cost of mounting and sending out the exhibition is nearly \$1 million.

Stuart Silver, the former head of the design department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art who supervised the installation of the "Treasures of Tutankhamun" and "Splendors of Dresden" exhibitions at the Met, is designer of the Folger's exhibition.

In announcing the exhibition yesterday, O. B. Hardison Jr., the Folger's director, said that the multi-media display would probably be the first traveling exhibition to "illustrate items in a humanitarian and literary context, rather than in a strictly visual context." In addition, Hardison said, this would be the first among recent major traveling exhibitions to be based on an American collection.

Among the items to be included are the so-called Jaggard First Folio of Shakespeare's works, which Henry Clay Folger, the library's founder, called "the most precious book in the world." Also included are Queen Elizabeth's personal Bible, a signed schoolbook belonging to King Henry VIII, an illuminated prayer-book presented to King Henry by Anne of Cleves when she was his wife, and a copy of the "Canterbury Tales" which is among the first books to be printed in England.

Several of the Folger's hand-colored medieval atlases also will be part of the exhibition, as will be the Allen model of the Shakespeare's Globe Theater, considered the most detailed model of the Globe in existence.

The Globe model normally rests in the Folger's main reading room, but that room, as well as the library's stacks and most of the rooms that are devoted to scholarship, were closed on May 1 for from 12 to 18 months so that a major renovation of the building could be undertaken. That factor was one which suggested the possibility of a traveling exhibition to library officials, according to James Elder, the Folger's deputy assistant to the director.

Coincidentally, Elder said, the Exxon Corp. came to the Folger and suggested an

exhibition, and development of the project brought in Metropolitan Life which, like Exxon, has furnished funds to televise the complete cycle of Shakespeare's plays on public television. The National Endowment provided development funds and also agreed to match half the funds donated by the two companies, Endowment officials said, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting also contributed in order to link the traveling exhibition to the televised plays.

The exhibition, which will occupy about 6,500 square feet of space, will be designed to give the visitor a picture of the worlds of Stratford-Upon-Avon and Elizabethan London, of the royal court of Elizabeth I, and of the seafaring world of the time. Then the visitor will step through what appears to be a courtyard of a theater of the period, and then into six mini-theater areas where, periodically, portions of six famous film productions of Shakespeare's works will be shown. The six, chosen to represent different aspects of the playwright's art, are "Romeo and Juliet," "Hamlet," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Henry V," "Julius Caesar" and "Macbeth."

The concluding segment of the exhibition will focus on the contemporary relevance of Shakespeare, and will include such ephemera as Shakespearean beer mugs, T-shirts and postage stamps.

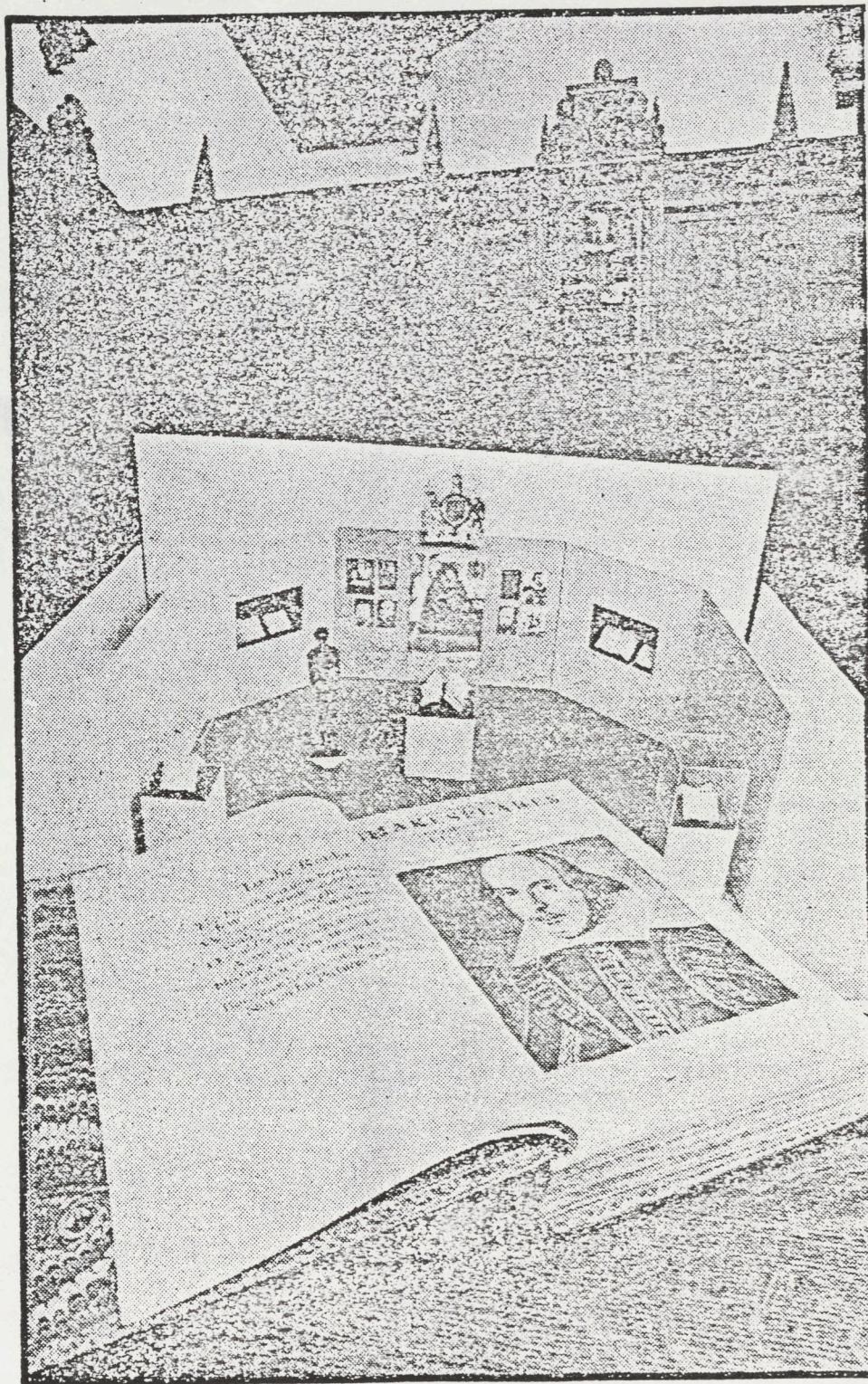
Designer Silver said the "encapsulating idea" of the exhibition was that Shakespeare was "not of an age but for all time." "Compared to this, King Tut was easy," he said after yesterday's press conference. "With Tut, all you had to do was lay the stuff on the floor; it was primarily a problem of crowd control. Here, there's a challenge in selling Shakespeare and making people want to see it."

The exhibition will open in San Francisco on Oct. 4. It will open next February in Kansas City's William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, next June in the Museum of Art of the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, in October of 1980 in the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, in February of 1981 in the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, and in an as-yet uncertain museum in New York in May of 1981 before closing in August of that year.

Hardison said that Washington would be "an obvious, marvelous place for a grand finale" after the nationwide tour, but added that plans for a Washington showing are "entirely indefinite at this point."

The National Endowment is supporting the exhibition with a total of about \$600,000. Exxon and Metropolitan Life each are providing about \$125,000, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is adding about \$125,000.

Folger meets a challenge: Selling Shakespeare



—Washington Star Photographer Brig Cabe

Shakespeare Folio, foreground, and a model of the exhibit.

Critic's Notebook: Spring Ended Theater's Drought

By RICHARD EDER

It is a Chaucer's April on Broadway. The drought, not just of March but of the whole season, is pretty well pierced to the root. A season that had been struggling along on a diet of feeble musicals — "Sweeney Todd" aside — and a number of eminently forgettable plays — "Wings" and "Spokesong" aside — has turned into a high-protein festival. Three splendid productions of first-rate plays ("Bedroom Farce," "The Elephant Man" and "Whose Life Is It Anyway?") backed up by two others, interesting though flawed in some ways ("Faith Healer" and "G.R. Point"), and all in the space of three weeks.

A number of things could be said about this influx: The fortifying effect that the approach of the Tony deadlines seems to have. The fact that of the three plays mentioned, two are British by birth, and one, though written by an American, might be called British by adoption. The wealth of acting in all three. The fact that two of the three use a deadly physical disablement as the vehicle for their themes. And so on.

But the theater can be marvelously inconsequential. Its trends are made of tissue paper. Its frequent spells of decline are always tragic, but only a little serious. And it would be both ponderous and risky to try to say anything of high significance about our current abundance, other than to register a respectful thank you. May can turn out to be quite as dry as March, and this is not a prediction: It can also be wetter than April. The theater has its weather, but no weatherman.

I suppose the strong British flavor of our recent successes does call for notice. Bernard Pomerance, author of the "The Elephant Man," is American, but he lives and works in England. When his play, written and first produced in London, uses society as one of its protagonists, it is British society.

Both "The Elephant Man" and "Whose Life" have a quality that is more characteristic of British theater than of our own, at least at this time. They are plays of ideas, and these ideas are enunciated with the utmost clarity, even if those in "The Elephant Man," dealing with the contradiction between the human need for authenticity and the human need to be protected by society are complex and sometimes indirect.

But they do not interpose any bar between being thoughtful and being theatrical; a bar that tends to come up in our theater, as with the interesting but stolid "Drinks Before Dinner" by E.L. Doctorow. Indeed, "The Elephant Man" and "Whose Life" are almost outrageously theatrical, to the point where their ideas may be suspected of glibness. A reading of the two plays in no way sustains such a suspicion.

It is something of a feature of Eng-

lish theater today, and one that has been frequently remarked on, that its plays deal with moral, social and sometimes philosophical issues more aggressively, and above all, more explicitly than ours.

There are many reasons for this, but I would suggest two among the others: One is that Britain, with a long and homogeneous history, is a country very much aware of its own identity. Insufferably so at times, no doubt. Society is not an abstraction but, with its divisions and the long awareness by each class of the others, a concrete and fitting figure. One which, in other words, is suitable for taking dramatic form on the stage.

The affectionate tensions between the senior doctor in "The Elephant Man" and the passionate Treves bear a class label: a bland upper middle class, established and powerful, taming an aggressive upstart for gradual absorption. There is a whole range of newer and older, middle-class gradations in the four couples in "Bedroom Farce," and there are others in "Whose Life."

Secondly, plays about ideas are necessarily plays in which a lot of talking gets done. The English language is a general treasure, but there is a particular vitality in the way many of the English use it. English talk, at its best, is action; and it is action, of course, that the stage requires. Ideas, and those biting phrases in which they are expressed, virtually become characters and occupy the stage almost as tangibly as if they had come with eyes and noses and personal histories.

Almost without exception, the talking in these plays is admirably done. It is no surprise that this should be so in "Bedroom Farce," whose cast came over intact from London and provides a splendidly tuned ensemble. It remains to be seen what will happen when American actors gradually replace the original cast. This is no reflection on American actors. In "The Elephant Man," three of the four principal actors are American, and their ensemble work is about as stunning as it could be.

But the probability is that the Americans incorporated into "Bedroom Farce" will use English accents — otherwise the play would make little sense. Now our actors have learned to do English accents remarkably well; far better than British actors do ours. Sometimes, though, there are undesirable side effects. The effort of maintaining an accent can drain some of the strength from a performance.

I had a distinct sense that James Mason's performance in "Faith Healer," accomplished as it was, lacked force; part of this came from the effort of keeping up a somewhat erratic Irish accent. In "Whose Life," Philip Bosco sounds admirably true as an upper-

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class Englishman, but I wonder whether the need to produce the accent kept his performance more at the surface than is usual for him.

Mr. Bosco's uncharacteristic lack of weight was part of a general problem that made "Whose Life" less effective than it could be. It seems strange to complain about acting in a production so transfigured by Tom Conti's extraordinary performance. The "Whose Life" we see is marvelous, but it should be even better.

What is lacking is an ensemble fully equipped to play to Mr. Conti. I have not seen the London production, in which other actors were used to second him, but even a recent production at the tiny Folger Theater in Washington was better balanced. John Neville-Clark was splendid as Ken Harrison, the paralyzed patient, though not so splendid as Mr. Conti; but the crucial roles of the two principal doctors, played here by Mr. Bosco and Jean Marsh, were given more exciting and more effective treatment.

In this case it is not a simple matter of esthetics. Some of the play's balance was thrown off. Some critics and some letters I have received have complained of the audience's applause on opening night when Harrison wins his fight for the right to die. It was a triumph so closely wedded to defeat that the applause was shocking.

The fault was not in the play nor, in fact, in the audience. With stronger performances elsewhere, the play's balance would have been more truly kept. Miss Marsh needed to convey more convincingly the pain of her conversion from the hospital's side to Harrison's. Above all, Mr. Bosco's Dr. Emerson, maintaining the doctor's imperative to fight for life, needs to be a figure whose moral purpose is as impressive as that of the patient who demands his freedom.

Mr. Bosco plays the doctor mainly as rigid, compulsive and nervously authoritarian. The play may argue, ultimately, for Harrison's freedom over his life, and we may accept or reject the argument; but the playwright has cast it as a tragic battle among two demanding goods, and both sides of the battle need to be fully represented.

The Washington Post

Kennedy Center Signs Folger to Broaden Terrace Base

season, according to Scheeder, and their three-and-a-half week engagements are designed to accommodate the same number of total patrons as an eight-week run at the smaller Folger.

The Folger will use its new arrangement to expand its subscription season from five to seven plays, and the two engagements at the Terrace will overlap with productions at the Folger's own facility on Capitol Hill. By simultaneously extending the runs of some plays, Scheeder explained, he hopes to build the Folger's subscription audience from roughly 8,000—which is all it can currently handle, he said—to as many as 10,000 or 11,000.

"It's a tremendous opportunity and it's exactly what this theater is desperately in need of," said Scheeder. Stevens called the plan a "mutually satisfactory arrangement for all of us."

The Terrace Theater not only has

513 seats — more than twice the number at the Folger — but a wider, deeper and taller work space, and an orchestra pit whose floor can be raised to expand either the performing or the seating area.

Scheeder said the Terrace will offer his group the chance to play with "toys I've never had before." But he jested that after a decade of dealing with the Folger's colonnade-like auditorium, he might find it necessary to install temporary columns among the Terrace Theater's seats to ease the shock of having unobstructed sightlines.

The Folger has been following a policy of running its Shakespeare plays for eight weeks each and its new plays for only six weeks, but the eight-week run will now become standard, said Scheeder. Nevertheless, he said, the increase in ticket sales made possible by this shift will probably not be sufficient to cover the cost of mounting the two productions at

the Terrace Theater. To make up the difference, the non-profit Folger group is in the process of raising an extra \$75,000.

BARC, a newly formed company with an equal number of British and American actors and a performing agenda to be split between the two countries, will present a new (and still unwritten) play by Tom Stoppard at the Terrace Theater in September.

John Houseman's company is principally composed of graduates of the Juilliard School's theater program. Its productions of "A Member of the Wedding" and "The Three Sisters" have been seen here, at the Eisenhower and Ford's Theater respectively.

Papp, who originally made his name as the sponsor of free Shakespeare in New York's Central Park, now runs a seven-stage complex in Greenwich Village, where he has launched, among other plays, "A Chorus Line," "That Championship Season," "Sticks and

Bones," "Short Eyes" and "For Colored Girls..."

His multi-racial productions of Shakespeare have generated controversy during the current theater season, and Papp recently announced plans to establish a "Third World Theater Company" composed heavily of black, Hispanic and Oriental actors. But "I don't just do plays with a minority angle," he said when asked about his interest in Washington. "I'd run out of plays."

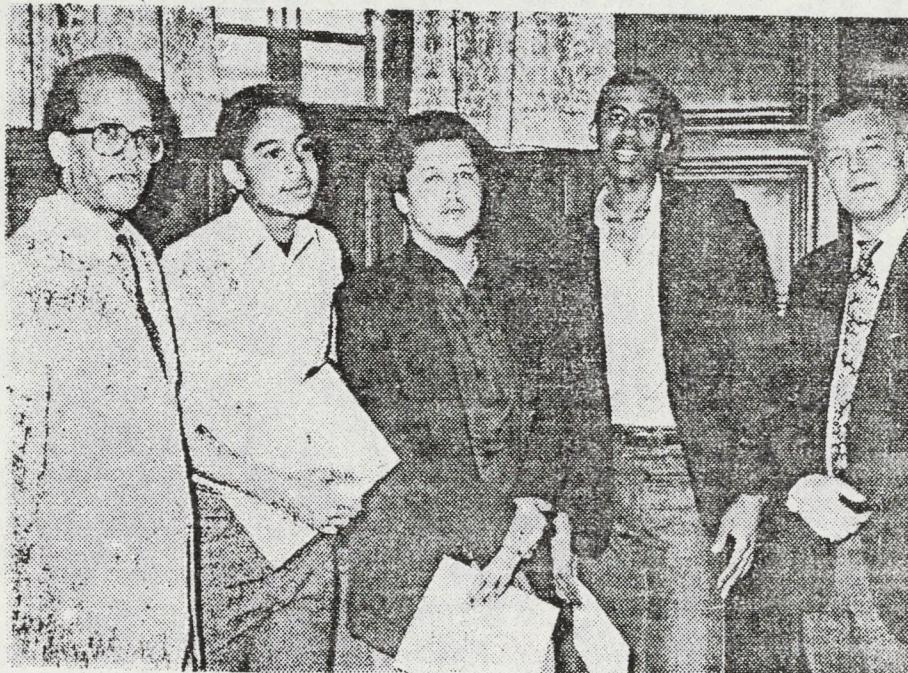
Stevens said yesterday that the burden of booking the Terrace Theater as well as the Eisenhower had spurred the decision to invite more outside groups in. As a producer, he said, he was already as busy as he wanted to be without "sticking my fingers into the Terrace Theater, too."

No more than a third of the Terrace Theatre's over-all schedule will be devoted to plays. Stevens said that dance, music and opera programming will fill the remainder.



UDC DANCERS pose during a break in rehearsals for their upcoming dance concert. Marcia Chislom, Denise Milliki Haynes, Tyrone Monroe and Philip Compton, left to right, will perform works

choreographed by various members of the group at the free dance concerts set to be held April 19 through 21 at the Miner Auditorium on Georgia Ave., N.W.



AWARD WINNERS in the Duke Ellington School for the Arts exhibit at Folger Library are joined by Ellington's principals and Folger's director at the exhibit's opening last weekend. Pictured

(photo by Glover)
from left to right are: Maurice Eldridge, principal of Ellington; Michael Dean, second place; Jeffery Butler, first place; Wendell Adams, third place and Dr. O. B. Hardison, director of the Folger Library.

The Washington Star

Folger production is stimulating and a neat coup

By David Richards
Washington Star Staff Writer

There have been countless plays about man battling the forces of technology that are oppressing him. But "Whose Life Is It Anyway?" may well be the first in which a man battles the very technology that is keeping him alive.

The struggle, undertaken by a young sculptor, paralyzed from the neck down and unwilling to accept a future of round-the-clock ministrations, makes for intellectually absorbing drama at the Folger Theater which, along with the Actors' Theater of Louisville is giving this British work its joint American premiere.

A substantial hit in London's West End last year, "Whose Life" has elicited lively interest on Broadway, which will see a production later this season. That the feisty Folger Theater Group should beat the commercial interests to the punch has to be considered a coup for the forces of regional theater.

It is no coincidence that playwright Brian Clark has cast his title in the form of a question. Although he has written what is traditionally described as a play of ideas, the script is strewn with questions, as timely as they are bothersome. Does man have an inalienable right to end his own life? When? Under what conditions? Is suicide necessarily the gesture of an unbalanced person or can it be viewed as a logical, positive act? How far should modern medicine go in the preservation of life? And what constitutes a viable, dignified life in the first place?

As the Karen Ann Quinlan case proved in this country, these are not simple questions. Clark compounds them by making the central character of his play, Ken Harrison, an alert, intelligent, even witty man. A horrible auto accident has left him with a ruptured spinal column and total dependency on an array of life-support systems. With special machinery, he may be able to read and use a typewriter one day, but otherwise he is doomed to immobility.

His feeble prospects are not enough. "If I cannot be a man," Harrison comes to realize, "I do not wish to be a medical achievement." He will engage a lawyer and bring suit against the hospital to have all critical treatments stopped.

Written in the quick, dry style of a documentary, "Whose Life" is every bit as cool and collected as Howard Sackler's "Semmelweis," another medical drama in town, is dark and brooding.



—Washington Star Photographer Glen Leach

Judith Ivey and John Neville-Andrews at the Folger.

Clark's doctors and nurses are crisp professionals, hiding their emotions under their white uniforms and a belief that life must be sustained at all costs. Their patient is lucid, ironic and sometimes playful. Loathing the pity of others, he rarely lavishes it on himself. As dispassionately staged by Louis Scheeder, the play doesn't show us a world of trauma and emotional anguish, as much as it lays some intellectually disturbing issues on the operating table and asks us to face up.

PERSONALLY, I would have preferred more raw drama and less debate. But it is possible that a more distraught production would mask Clark's main thesis: the choice of life belongs to the individual. In our increasingly computerized society, we must be free to say "no" to technology if we choose. The life-prolonging miracles of science are not miraculous unless we have given our consent.

This is obviously theater of the moment, stimulating because it touches problems that are coming increasingly to the fore. With the exception of the bed-ridden sculptor, though, Clark hasn't really created interesting characters. The various nurses and doctors and barristers simply embody different sides of the argument. This gives the play a slightly contrived air that is not entirely dispelled by the Folger production.

RESTRICTED TO the use of his head, John Neville-Andrews invests the sculptor with a surprising amount of puckish charm. Resolute in his wish to die, he also suggests a quiet longing for the pleasures he will leave behind, pleasures represented by a pretty nurse or a cup of coffee. It is a likeable performance, but more significantly, given the play's argumentative thrust, a perfectly understandable one.

Marion Lines and Judith Ivey offer solid support — the one as a compassionate doctor who cannot overtly encourage the patient in his pursuit of death, although she believes it to be the proper course of action; the other as a naive young nurse, whose natural effervescence hasn't yet been starched stiff.

Most of the others, however, have the forced sobriety and understated urgency that is characteristic of the TV soaps. Peter Vogt, David Cromwell and Terry Hinz all seem distinctly uncomfortable to find themselves in a hospital, even though it has been designed with gleaming realism by Hugh Lester. Mikel Lambert's tremulousness as a social worker seems excessive for the part, while Albert Corbin, as the judge called to the hospital for the sculptor's trial, appears to be posing for a Saturday Evening Post cover.

Despite such performances, "Whose Life" is very apt to engage your mind. Answer one of the questions it poses, and two more pop up. Clark's hero may find a way out, but there are no easy solutions for the rest of us.

The New York Times

Theater: 'Custer' In Connecticut

By MEL GUSSOW

Contradictory Hero

Special to The New York Times

STAMFORD, Conn., Jan. 31 — George Armstrong Custer is one of the most curious and contradictory of American heroes. Admired as a blacksmith's son who quickly rose to the top rank as battlefield leader, he died defending his flag — only to have his honor and his memory tarnished. Clearly, he was a far more complex figure than that portrait perpetuated by storybook and Hollywood myth.

Robert E. Ingham has taken the Custer saga — fact, legend and possibilities — and has woven it into a drama called "Custer" that is both a comprehensive historical portrait and an illuminating act of the imagination. The work was first presented in 1978 at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater and was restaged in Washington this season by the Folger Theater Group. The Folger production, under the direction of Louis W. Scheeder, opened last night at the Hartman Theater Company. The play, performance, direction and design are all in concord, an artistic regiment marshaled for a single purpose.

As the curtain rises, there is a hint of a pageant in the air. Under a canopy in front of a swirling Turner sky, actors in crisp, cream-toned uniforms and actresses in gowns begin to talk about their lives in relation to General Custer. What follows, with a background of songs of the period, is a pulsating theatrical biography of a man, his command and his times.

There are four major characters, and by the end of the evening each stands out in full dimension. Custer is vain and ambitious, a self-promoter who values appearance (he color-coded his columns of horses), but is also self-harmful. Tom Blair plays him as the opposite of the Errol Flynn movie image. He looks like a smart young man dressed up in a soldier suit — as Custer did in his early photographs. This is neither a fool nor a madman; his reasonableness makes him all the more frightening. One of the many strengths of Mr. Ingham's play is that he allows the audience to draw its own parallels between Custer and contemporary generals. The play is definably of its period, but it echoes with reverberations.

Custer's primary aides, both insubordinate, are Col. William Benteen and Maj. Marcus Reno. Each is bitterly envious of his leader and each, in effect, deserts him under fire. Their acts are seen less as cowardice than as a triumph of caution over blind obedience. Even more than Custer, Benteen is the tragic figure of the play. He is tortured by his responsibility; he hated Custer, but he loved many who died with him.

As played by John McMartin with a suave but suffering dignity, Benteen is a silver-haired, quietly querulous malcontent, devoted to his men and also to his pastimes of drinking and baseball. He is unable to compete with his general in the area of image-making, and is inwardly embittered about playing a lesser role in the canvas of military history. In one of numerous small moments that reveal character, Benteen tells us how, as a Union officer, he captured his rebel father in a skirmish with the Confederacy. "I captured my daddy!" says Mr. McMartin with a glow of pride that seems to exude from his face and every polished button on his uniform.

Major Reno is earthier and more obviously guilt-ridden. William Newman accents the man's increasing self-awareness. In common with Benteen, he has been blighted by Big Horn. As survivors of a massacre, they have to pay a price for being alive. Custer's wife, Libbie (Sandy Faison), wrote books about her husband and went on the lecture circuit. In Miss Faison's characterization, Libbie is almost as dedicated to her husband as he is to himself. However, she is visibly shaken by the questions raised about his foolhardy behavior.

By indirection, the stage becomes a kind of courtroom. It is almost as if American history is on trial along with Custer. One by one, witnesses step forward — six actors play minor characters and chorus — those who outlived Custer as well as those who died by his side. They testify in their own behalf and they interrogate one another. Confidently the drama moves from the aftermath to the eve of battle, and finally to the battle itself. As the evidence accumulates, Custer stands heroically as if posing for Frederic Remington.

What really happened at Little Big



Gerry Goodstein

John McMartin in the Hartman Theater Company's production of Robert E. Ingham's "Custer."

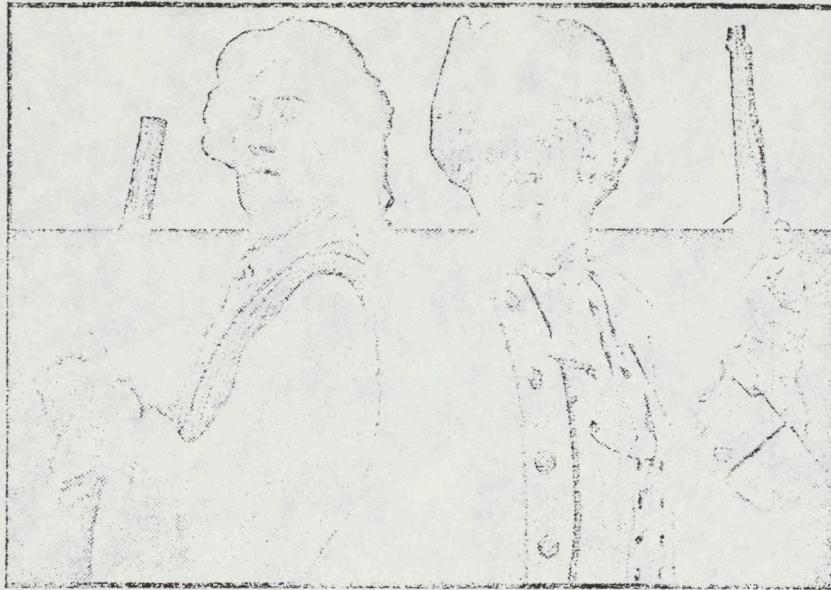
THE NEW YORK TIMES,

Horn? One of the playwright's suggestions is that it might literally have been suicide — inexperienced Indian-fighters frightful of being slaughtered by savages. In any case, under orders, more than 250 men went to their deaths — and glory turned into vainglory.

In the rich tapestry of the text, only one area seems to be neglected: we find out little directly about the Indians' position. However, by the end of the play we are convinced of the wrongness of the American invasion, and in case we forget the nation's responsibility, there is Custer gently reminding his public, "You rewarded me."

The treatment is authoritative and exhaustive, which means for one thing that the evening is slightly overlong. A few judicious trims would not hurt the text, just as a few of the supporting actors could tone down their performances a bit. But the four leading actors are faultless, and the author writes with a vibrancy that is uncommon in a play drawn from history. Four years after, "Custer" is an exemplary Bicentennial play.

CUSTER, by Robert E. Ingham; directed by Louis W. Scheeder; musical direction and vocal arrangements by William Penn; scenery and lighting design by Hugh Lester; lighting adaptation by Frances Aronson; costume design by Rosemary Ingham; choreography by Virginia Freeman; stage manager, Hope Chillington. Presented by the Hartman Theater Company, Margot and Del Tenney, producing directors; Roger L. Meeker, managing director, in association with the Folger Theater Group.
At the Stamford (Conn.) Center for the Arts.



Joan Marcus

John Neville-Andrews and Ralph Cosham in John O'Keeffe's "Wild Oats" at the Folger Theater in Washington.

Theater: Return Of Comic 'Wild Oats'

By MEL GROSSOW

A Merry Band

WHEN anyone to ask what plays I would like to take with me to a desert island, high on the list would be John O'Keeffe's "Wild Oats." However, in order to feel the full flavor of this rollicking 18th-century romance one would have to be accompanied by a troupe of actors, either the Royal Shakespeare Company or the company that Leonard Peters has put together for the current revival of the play at the Folger Theater Group. "Wild Oats" is not so much an emotion to be recollected in tranquillity as a live performance by a merry band of players.

I have now seen three productions of "Wild Oats," at the R.S.C., New York's C.S.C., and the Folger, and each time the comedy seems as fresh as it is familiar. One laughs aloud at the convoluted escapades of the rogue hero, Jack Rover, and it is impossible not to become misty-eyed at the golden-hued denouement. This is a play in which someone is always staking his or her life on someone else's innocence, in which the righteous are wronged until the end when every single wrong is righted.

Clifford Williams's R.S.C. production, a rediscovery of this popular classic after years of neglect, gave Alan Howard his finest role as Jack Rover. Christopher Martin's C.S.C. production last season proved that the play was foolproof fun. Mr. Peters's version in our nation's capital is, in a word, capital.

WILD OATS, by John O'Keeffe; director, Leonard Peters; composer, William Penn; scenic designer, Russell Anthony; costume designer, Hilary A. Sherr; lighting designer, Richard Winkler; production stage manager, Elizabeth Hamilton. Presented by the Folger Theater Group, Louis W. Schaefer, producer. At Washington.

Sir George Thunder	.....	Ralph Cosham
Rover	.....	John Neville-Andrews
Harry Thunder	.....	Eric Zwemmer
Banks	.....	Rev. Franklin
John Dory	.....	Richard Mathews
Farmer Ganimon	.....	Moutrie Pilton
Lamp	.....	Michael Cabel
Ephraim Smooth	.....	Kenneth Gray
Sir	.....	John Gilliss
Zachariah	.....	David Cromwell
Muz	.....	Jeff McMahon
Trap	.....	Mark Basile
Twitch	.....	Jim Eard
Walter and Third Ruffian	.....	Henry Fonte
Lendlord	.....	Carlos Juan Gonzalez
First Ruffian	.....	Marc Lee Adams
Second Ruffian	.....	Leif Dickey
Lady Amaranth	.....	Cara Duff-MacCormick
Amelia	.....	Mikel Lambert
Jane	.....	Glynis Bell
Auld	.....	Karen Bayly

The Folger's woodewn Elizabethan stage, embellished by Russell Anthony's simple rustic design, is a perfect place for "Wild Oats," and John Neville-Andrews is an inspired choice to play Rover. He is a comic hero, an itinerant actor as well as a "strolling gentleman" as in the work's subtitle. He is in and out of mischief, and when he is struck by love for the Quaker heiress, Lady Amaranth, he is smitten. It is a thunderbolt from the skies and it almost flattens him to the floor. Mr. Neville-Andrews accents the clownish side of the character, but he does not ignore Rover's impulsive sense of good will and his headstrong romantic inclinations. As a traveling actor, Rover has memorized a folio of Shakespeare. His dialogue is riddled with borrowings from the Bard, as adapted for his own

uses — for flattery, for insults, to fill in the spaces.

It is Mr. Neville-Andrews's clever notion to imitate the characters that he is quoting. A line from "Hamlet," and suddenly he is melancholy. A random sampling from "Richard III," and, reflexively, a hump appears on his back. The actor never misses a trick, and occasionally he draws a trump card. When a companion, wondering about his relationship with Lady Amaranth, asks him, "Do you love her?" Mr. Neville-Andrews pauses as if lost in thought, then suddenly snaps to attention and offers the author's line, "To distraction!"

With his angular features and madcap grin, the actor looks and reacts just a bit like a fugitive from a Monte Python show, convincingly demonstrating that John O'Keeffe and his strolling players may have been antecedents to the mirthful mania of these contemporary English satirists. Certainly the plot is as twisted and labyrinthine as in any modern lampoon.

Once we catch the drift, we are Mr. O'Keeffe's confidantes. We are swept away in a Sargasso Sea of devilish duplicity: we know that she knows but he doesn't yet know. Rover's long-lost mother's rodomontade recapitulation of her entire biography — love, abandonment, loss of child, destitution — takes about two minutes. Mikel Lambert delivers the history without pausing for a breath, as if she is a woman possessed. She seems taken by surprise by the story's conclusion. With justification, the audience breaks into applause.

Under Mr. Peters's direction, the principals strike the right balance between total immersion and self-mockery. Cara Duff-MacCormick is a charming Lady Amaranth. She even makes the woman's sense of propriety — actors are "profane stage players" until she meets one — seem honorable and humorous.

Ralph Cosham is properly stormy as the aging Sir George Thunder and Richard Mathews is craftily in character as his artful valet. Kenneth Gray is a villainous Ephraim Smooth. Glynis Bell and John Gilliss elicit smiles as two ingenuous farm youngsters with a habit of calling their father "feyther." Each time the word "feyther" is uttered, it is a laughline, as is "Abrawang," that name that Rover misapplies to old Sir George, and turns into a twanging insult. Sir George has one of the play's most O'Keeffian lines. Confronted with his own deceitful wild-acted youth, the abashed Sir George regrets: "The worm of remorse has since gnawed my timbers."

The climax of "Wild Oats" is like a crazy quilt of Shakespearean mistaken identity. True identities tumble with dizzying speed. Hypocrites are unmasked, villains exposed, lost sons and mothers reunited, prodigal fathers redeemed, paradise regained. "Wild Oats" is a splendidly comical comedy.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Wednesday, October 18, 1978

Performing Arts

'Whose Life Is It?'

Reprinted from yesterday's late editions

"Whose Life Is It Anyway?" is an exceptionally intelligent, perceptive drama. A current London success, Brian Clark's play begins the Folger Theater Group's ninth season and is having its "American premiere" here concurrent with another production by the Actors Theater of Louisville.

Led by John Neville-Andrews, the Folger's major roles enjoy incisive performances in a commendable production. The run, which had its official start Monday night, will be through Nov. 19.

Do not be put off by the theme, euthanasia. That death and how to face it is having a theatrical vogue is not to be deplored. Mankind is united in awareness that we all are to die. Even if only secretly, we yearn for sensitive direction to prepare for the inevitable.

Clark has imagined an unusually clear-cut situation. Ken Harrison, a sculptor who also teaches his art, has been paralyzed from the neck down

in a car accident. His mind is alert and clear. Wholly capable of reasoning and with a quick wit which reveals what sort of alert, life-loving man he has been, Ken has decided, calmly and quietly, that to be a talking head, dependent on others for all his bodily needs, is not life.

The doctor who "for about 48 hours just kept you alive from minute to minute" sees his paramount responsibility in keeping the body alive. Removal of a catheter will be fatal to Ken's body in a matter of days. Ken obtains a solicitor who understands his aim: "To die quietly and with as much dignity as I can muster . . . The dignity lies in the choice."

The implications within the situation are reflected in that beautiful British art, understatement. Though the conflict is between medicine and the law, we are made conscious of others.

Ken's father and mother have reacted the opposite from what he might have expected. His fiancee obeys his order to bow out. A youthful probationer nurse, a more matronly

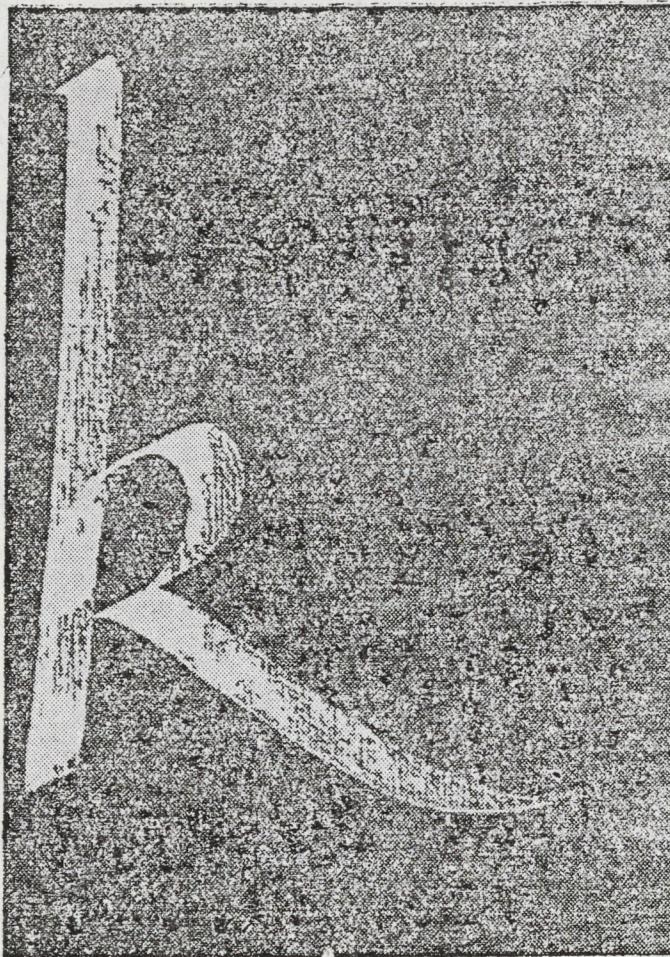
"Ward Sister" and a woman doctor who can spark his intellectual respect suggest varying points of view, and a West Indian Orderly adds a further attitude.

Thanks to these interesting characters, all well played, the didactic tone is avoided. Clark could hardly state this particular dilemma more clearly. He creates the dignity Ken demands: "If I cannot be a man, I do not wish to be a medical achievement."

Confined to act only from the neck up, Neville-Andrews makes Ken marvelously alive, witty and courageous, a performance which never flags. Mary Hara, Judith Ivey, Marion Lines, Alvin Hippolyte and Ralph Cosham, in other major roles, are all impressive.

That marbles-in-the-mouth disease which too often afflicts Americans playing Britons mars the final portion of the performance, overlapping leading to under diction. But Hugh Lester's sets and lighting are exemplary in service to this very fine play.

—Richard L. Coe



A Collection of Calligraphy

By Boris Weintraub
Washington Star Staff Writer

"Scribere, sicut mores, consistit in lineaem describere alicubi," proclaims a hand-lettered plaque hanging in the Anne Hathaway Gallery of the Folger Shakespeare Library, and, for those who cannot comprehend Latin, there is a parallel hand-lettered translation in English: "Calligraphy, like morality, consists of drawing the line somewhere."

Calligraphers, you see, have a funny sense of humor about their art.

Sometimes they have to have, as the group show of the works of members of the Washington Calligraphers Guild will make clear to those who go to the Folger between the show's opening tonight and its closing on Sept. 30.

FOR EXAMPLE, there is a stunning work by Mary Larson, a gilded and illuminated square with a double alphabet forming the perimeter. As other society members explain it, Larson follows the medieval recipe for the gilding process, including the use of a smelly fish glue, white lead, rock sugar and a clay, all of which is ground up and flattened and rolled until it looks like a pizza. Then it is cut up, and placed in the proper place on the parchment, a sheet of gold is carefully blown so that it covers that place, and then, *only if the humidity is right*, the gold will adhere to the whole mess.

There is a lesson here, something about things of beauty rising out of humble beginnings, but meanwhile, a sense of humor is urgent.

Humor, and patience. None of the more than 40 works hanging in the show was done in the twinkling of an eye. Not the historical map of Upper Marlboro, Md., executed by Mimi Armstrong, which includes a border of tobacco leaves and coats of arms of the oldest Upper Marlboro families. Not the double biblical quotation executed by Jodie Powell, a college student who spent the summer working in a Crystal City store called Calligraphers, Ink: the 23rd Psalm in red spiraling around and interweaving with the Beatitudes in blue. Not the reproduction of an "X" from the Book of Kells by Penny Pickett, the incoming president of the Washington Calligraphers Guild, in which the feminist phrase, "Adam was a rough draft," is visible within the illuminated outlines of the "X."

FOR SOME REASON, as a matter of fact,

CALLIGRAPHY:

THE WASHINGTON STAR

A sense of humor is an essential ingredient

calligraphy is largely an art practiced by women in this society, though, as Mimi Armstrong, who teaches calligraphy at the Smithsonian and laughingly calls herself "the leading calligrapher in Upper Marlboro," says, "I usually have two or three men out of 20 in my classes, and they really stick with it."

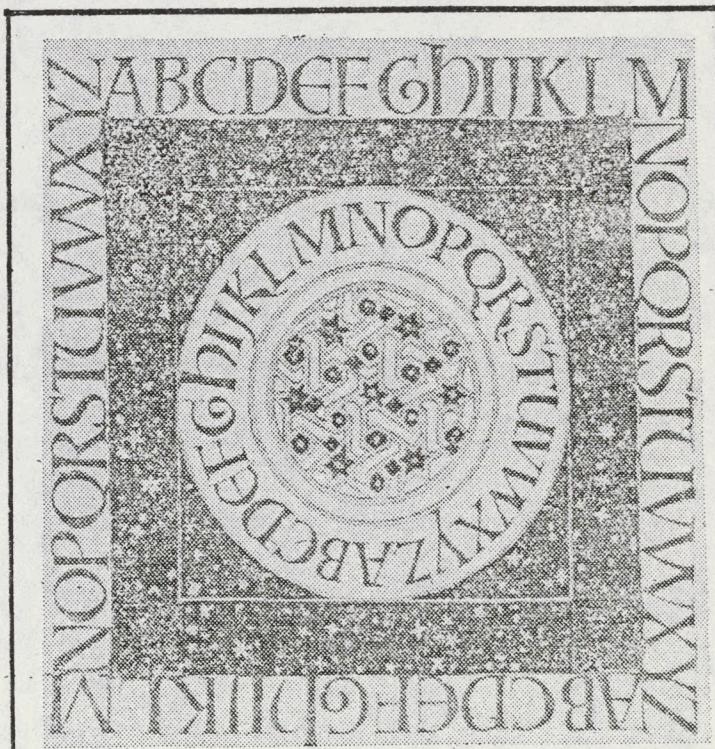
Their 'bread-and-butter' work consists of proclamations and resolutions and certificates of congratulations. It's boring, they say, but that's how you make a living.

Other Guild members speculate that the reason for the female dominance is that leadership in the field comes from England — the Society of Scribes and Illuminators in London is considered the Oxford of calligraphy instruction — and women became prominent in English calligraphy during World War II, when most English men were otherwise occupied.

Many Washington calligraphers, like Jenny Mitchell, a native of Madison, Wis., who arrived here a few years ago and now has a studio on Capitol Hill, find that their "bread-and-butter" work consists of proclamations and resolutions, retirement plaques and certificates of congratulations. It's boring, they say, but that's how you make a living. They reserve their own time to their artistic endeavors, they say.

At any rate, the work on display in the show is enough to make a visitor rue the hours spent with Miss Grundy in the fourth grade, laboriously making oval letters with just the right swirl so as to rate a passing grade in penmanship. For what is penmanship, after all? Well, Linda Abrams, the guild's incoming vice president, has entered a work, in alternating lines of red and blue, which is a quotation from Edward Johnston, a founding father of modern calligraphy, and which explains it this way:

"FORMAL PENMANSHIP is a handicap. The purpose of writing is to be read. The penman is a craftsman. His direct objective is to write well. The words are of the first importance. The scribe's ideal is to give the words perfect presentation. The scribe's first duty is to his author. He usually aims at making his presentation beautiful."



"Formal penmanship is a handicap. The purpose of writing is to be read. The penman is a craftsman. His direct objective is to write well. The words are of the first importance. The scribe's ideal is to give the words perfect presentation. He usually aims at making his presentation beautiful."

But then, there are handicaps and there are handicaps. Watching a reporter scribble illegible notes into a notebook with a cramped hand, Calligraphers Guild members clucked and shook their heads. It was hopeless, they agreed; the reporter was — is — left-handed, and, as one said, "Left-handers are terrible. They just smear their hands across what they've written and everything."

"Yes," said another. "Whenever we get a left-handed student, we always try to palm her off on some other teacher."

The reporter was chagrined, and returned to his office to write his story. On a computer terminal.

The Washington Star

JOE L. ALLBRITTON, *Publisher*

SIDNEY EPSTEIN, *Executive Editor* EDWIN M. YODER JR., *Associate Editor*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 1978

The Folger flowering

Nobody — and no institution, either — is likely to outgrow Shakespeare. Certainly not the Folger Library, which continues to be what it was when it began, back in 1932: a center for, if not Bardolotry, at least an appropriate devotion to the sweet singer from Stratford-on-Avon.

The heart of the exceptionally attractive marble building two blocks from the Capitol is still the Elizabethan theater where a good many of the 37 plays have had creditable productions. Shakespeare memorabilia — costumes, old books, portraits of David Garrick, Mrs. Siddons and Fanny Kemble — still dominate the gallery. And behind the scenes, the Shakespeare scholars are busier than ever parsing the endless fascinations of the writer, the writings and the culture surrounding them.

Exploring Shakespeare's portion of the Renaissance has led the Folger to a Renaissance of its own, in which more and more varied activities have been added to the narrowly Shakespearean programs under its auspices. The poetry intoned from the boards of the little theater isn't all his any more; there's a series of readings by contemporary poets. The plays don't stop with the 37; in between Macbeths and Hamlets, there are dramas by living playwrights. The art in the tiny downstairs gallery doesn't begin and end with steel engravings of Sothern and Marlowe declaiming; it could be anything from modern Japanese prints to photographs of American Indians.

Actually, the scope and dynamism of what goes on in today's Folger has begun to resemble that of its larger neighbor, the Library of Congress. The new vitality of music at the Folger is perhaps the most vivid example.

The Folger Consort, which has just completed its first season as resident ensemble for early European music, has given the Library and the

city a remarkable opportunity to experience medieval, Renaissance and Baroque music live. The four young men who make up the Consort are not only superb performers on a number of early instruments; they are also scholars with a lively appreciation of the repertoire history has left for the lutes, viols, recorders and drums they play so well. Every one of this year's programs has been a short course in the musicology of a particular corner of the 15th, 16th or 17th century world.

Furthermore, the Consort has worked with imported talent for particularly rich effects — singers, harpsichordists and artists such as the New York Cornet and Sacbut Ensemble, who joined the resident four for this week's concert honoring the Florence of the Medici era. While it is still rather a shoestring operation financially, the Consort has been a resounding critical and popular success and subscriptions are already being offered at both the Library and theater booking windows for a second series of concerts to begin in October.

It is hard to believe that this East Capitol Street flowering is less than 10 years old. The Folger was originally more of a card catalog and display case than a backdrop for the performing arts. It was only after 1969, when O.B. Hardison, the present director, took over, that money was found to bring the theater into line with city safety regulations so that public performances could be given on a regular basis. The acting company has taken shape since then, the poets have come since then, the art shows have come since then, and now there is the musical dimension. All with ever-growing audiences.

Washington may yet make it as a cultural as well as a political capital city. At any rate, there's a corner on East Capitol Street that is doing its part to make it so.

TRUSTEES FOR HARVARD UNIVERSITY
THE CENTER FOR HELLENIC STUDIES
3100 WHITEHAVEN STREET, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

January 18, 1978

Director
Folger Shakespeare Library
201 East Capitol Street S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Obie:

Since the press seems to have taken no notice of the world-shaking event recorded in the enclosed press kit, I send you one to bring you up to date on developments in the world of the drama. Also, in my new incarnation as a dramatic critic, I want to compliment you and everyone responsible for the recent production of Two Gentlemen of Verona. We went to it with a feeling that it was going to be an interesting academic exercise--a play one ought to see because it was so rarely produced (though one did not expect to enjoy it). We got the surprise of our lives. It was a brilliant production; the swift pace of the direction and above all the clarity of delivery which distinguished every single actor (but especially the two principals) brought the play to life as first-class theater. It was amazing to see that all the problems which have bothered critics (the final twist, for example, by which Valentine calmly offers his lady love to Proteus) all these 'problems' disappeared in the performance and the skillful direction made the ending not only acceptable but something devoutly wished for by the audience--we wanted to have our cake and eat it too, to have both loving couples united and the friends reconciled; Shakespeare and the director kept dangling this possibility before our eyes and finally served it up to us in a breathless romp which defied all disbelief. Once again, though, the thing that impressed me was the care taken to give the words their full value--something that is very rare on the stage today. Here again the director's hand was visible; the emphasis on clear delivery might have undermined dramatic illusion but it never did. The long soliloquy in which Proteus explains his change of heart and plans was particularly brilliant in this regard; with a subdued delivery and a minimum of gesture, the actor somehow managed to convince us of his passion while not missing a single rhetorical emphasis. It really was a lesson in how Shakespeare ought to be played and we both of us look forward to the next production. I suppose I ought really to have written this letter to the director of the theatre group rather than to you but I'm sure you'll pass the remarks on and in any case I hope to see him and the members of the cast at the February festival (where the prospect of ale served by Falstaff should be enough to bring people in from many miles away).

Meanwhile, will you entertain the possibility of coming to have lunch with my fellows this year? (I enclose a list). I know that you will reply that it is your turn to give me lunch but on the other hand, unlike you, I have a regular setup here which means that nobody has to put themselves out. In fact, any day in the near future when you think you can get away, you would be very welcome here. Wednesday would be the nicest day for us all since on that day the wives are invited and one of them happens to be a scholar more or less in your field--she is working on 17th century prose and is a specialist on, among other people, Hooker.

Page 2

Do let me know (you can just pick up the phone) if we can hope to see you here.

With all best wishes,

Bernard

Bernard [KNOX]

BMW:cg

P.S. We would talk about fund-raising, too.

Living with Defeat

MEDAL OF HONOR RAG

by TOM COLE

Lost wars haunt people. In some ways the South is still haunted by the Civil War. Hitler might never have come to power but for the fact that the Germans were defeated in World War I. The U.S. never lost a war before Viet Nam, and, undeclared though it was, most Americans are so haunted by it that they have wiped an eraser across the blackboard of their minds.

Occasionally a playwright comes along to chalk up the score all over again. David Rabe did it with visceral force in *Sticks and Bones*, a play in which the hero is at peace only with the skeletons who stalk his mind. *Medal of Honor Rag* is a slighter drama argued like a legal brief rather than felt like a wound.

In his first play, Tom Cole, 43, who has written short stories and a novel (*An End to Chivalry*), argues that it is incalculably cynical for a society to reward a man with the Congressional Medal of Honor for doing what it has taught him was evil and abhorrent—murdering other human beings. Cole's medal winner, Dale Jackson (Howard E. Rollins Jr.), a black Viet Nam hero, has cracked up. A psychiatrist (David Clennon) tries to rid Jackson of his survival guilt complex. Why did he live and his buddies die? The notion that survival can be worse than death is probably the weakest proposition in the play. However, the two principals are admirable. Wary, arrogant, street-wise, tormented, Rollins' Jackson makes demands on every playgoer's conscience, and David Clennon's firm, troubled, incisively probing psychiatrist merits a call from the producers of *Equus* whenever Richard Burton leaves that strikingly similar role.

T.E. Kalem

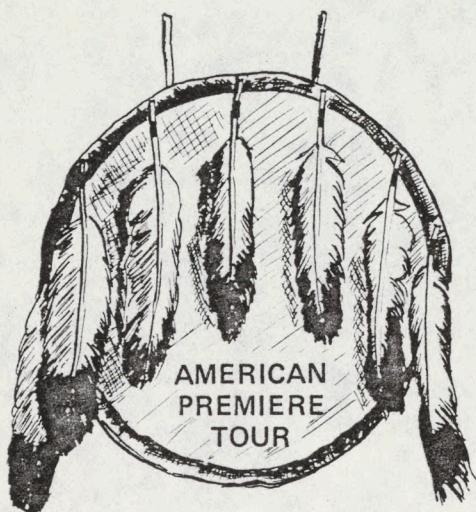
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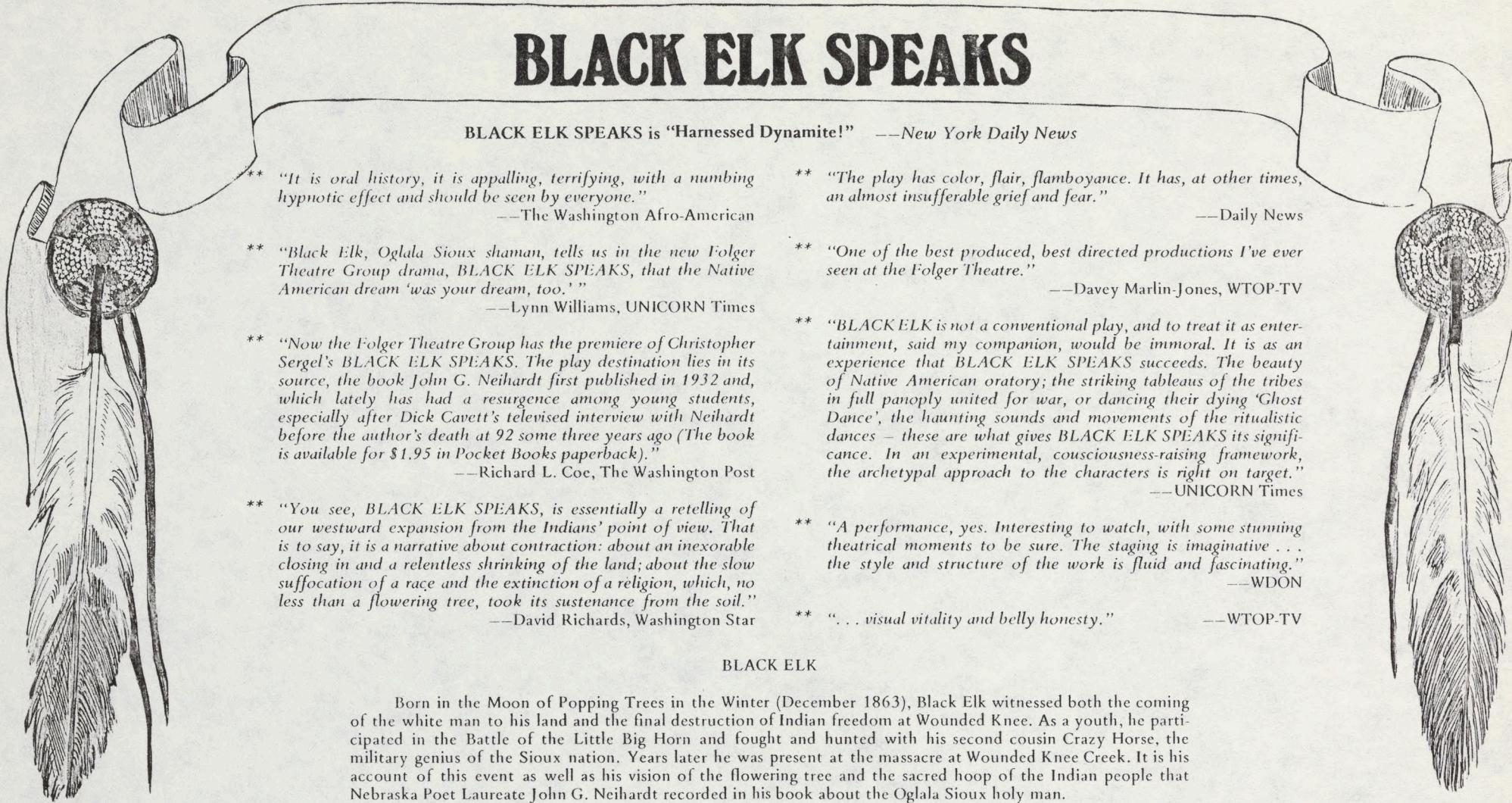
presents the

FOLGER
THEATRE GROUP

Production of

**BLACK ELK
SPEAKS**





BLACK ELK SPEAKS

BLACK ELK SPEAKS is "Harnessed Dynamite!" —New York Daily News

** "It is oral history, it is appalling, terrifying, with a numbing hypnotic effect and should be seen by everyone."

—The Washington Afro-American

** "Black Elk, Oglala Sioux shaman, tells us in the new Folger Theatre Group drama, BLACK ELK SPEAKS, that the Native American dream 'was your dream, too.'"

—Lynn Williams, UNICORN Times

** "Now the Folger Theatre Group has the premiere of Christopher Sergel's BLACK ELK SPEAKS. The play destination lies in its source, the book John G. Neihardt first published in 1932 and, which lately has had a resurgence among young students, especially after Dick Cavett's televised interview with Neihardt before the author's death at 92 some three years ago (The book is available for \$1.95 in Pocket Books paperback)."

—Richard L. Coe, The Washington Post

** "You see, BLACK ELK SPEAKS, is essentially a retelling of our westward expansion from the Indians' point of view. That is to say, it is a narrative about contraction: about an inexorable closing in and a relentless shrinking of the land; about the slow suffocation of a race and the extinction of a religion, which, no less than a flowering tree, took its sustenance from the soil."

—David Richards, Washington Star

** "The play has color, flair, flamboyance. It has, at other times, an almost insufferable grief and fear."

—Daily News

** "One of the best produced, best directed productions I've ever seen at the Folger Theatre."

—Davey Marlin-Jones, WTOP-TV

** "BLACK ELK is not a conventional play, and to treat it as entertainment, said my companion, would be immoral. It is as an experience that BLACK ELK SPEAKS succeeds. The beauty of Native American oratory; the striking tableaus of the tribes in full panoply united for war, or dancing their dying 'Ghost Dance', the haunting sounds and movements of the ritualistic dances — these are what gives BLACK ELK SPEAKS its significance. In an experimental, consciousness-raising framework, the archetypal approach to the characters is right on target."

—UNICORN Times

** "A performance, yes. Interesting to watch, with some stunning theatrical moments to be sure. The staging is imaginative . . . the style and structure of the work is fluid and fascinating."

—WDON

** ". . . visual vitality and belly honesty."

—WTOP-TV

BLACK ELK

Born in the Moon of Popping Trees in the Winter (December 1863), Black Elk witnessed both the coming of the white man to his land and the final destruction of Indian freedom at Wounded Knee. As a youth, he participated in the Battle of the Little Big Horn and fought and hunted with his second cousin Crazy Horse, the military genius of the Sioux nation. Years later he was present at the massacre at Wounded Knee Creek. It is his account of this event as well as his vision of the flowering tree and the sacred hoop of the Indian people that Nebraska Poet Laureate John G. Neihardt recorded in his book about the Oglala Sioux holy man.

Tuesday, May 24, 1977

...R

Delightful Guitarists At Folger Library

By Joseph McLellan

A program like the one presented last night at the Folger Library sets you to thinking, and the first thoughts it brought to my mind were wildly optimistic.

The featured instrument was the guitar, chronically a sort of stepchild in classical music, and all eight items on the program were composed in the 20th century; half of them by composers living in Washington.

And the music was, without exception, a delight.

Our town is uncommonly endowed with good classical guitarists (we can thank the benign influence of Sophocles Papas for much of that), but its difference from other towns of similar size is not overwhelming.

Look around the United States, and you may be led to the conclusion that people who play the guitar almost outnumber those who don't; that's a slight exaggeration, but the guitar is certainly the most widely played instrument on the musical scene.

Possibly all that has been lacking for a breakthrough in the status of the guitar as a classical instrument has been the shortage of repertoire—fresh music enjoyable to the listener and challenging to the player.

The music played by guitarist Larry Snitzler last night—his own and that of three other Washingtonians: Glenn Smith, N.H. Derwyn Holder and Ralph Turek—indicated that this repertoire is now being produced in Washington and, one must assume, elsewhere as well.

It has taken a bit over a half-century since Segovia began to show the world the instrument's potential, but the golden age of the guitar may be finally upon us.

I don't mean that any of the four pieces by Washington composers was an earth-shaking masterpiece—none was quite as imposing as the Ginastera sonata that had its premiere here earlier this season—but all were well-made, original and thoroughly enjoyable, good entries for the kind of basic repertoire the instrument needs.

"Abstract," by Ralph Turek was the most demanding technically and the one closest to an avant-garde flavor. Glenn Smith's "Three Pieces" were strong in impressionistic atmosphere, rhythmically vigorous and melodically fluent. Holder's Sonatina in One Movement and Snitzler's own "Reminiscences upon a study of Fernando Sor" were beautifully formed, immediately attractive music.

Also on the program were a transcription of Satie's first "Gymnopedie," Falla's splendid "Hommage a Debussy," the brilliant, colorful "Estancias" of Antonio Ruiz-Pipo and four of the Villa-Lobos Etudes which are a cornerstone of modern guitar music. Snitzler's technique is equal to the musical sense which went into building this absorbing program; most of the time, he made no special effort to show virtuosity (as distinct from musicianship), but where it was demanded, as in the 11th Villa-Lobos Etude, it was produced brilliantly.

Thursday, May 5, 1977

Purchase of Reformation Books

A Coup for the Folger Library

By Jean M. White

With a single en bloc acquisition of 850 early editions—516 printed before 1531—the Folger Library has become a premier center for Reformation studies, adding a new dimension to Washington's cultural resources.

The purchase, which quite properly can be called an exciting coup in the scholarly world, was announced yesterday by O. B. Hardison Jr., Folger director. He called it the Library's most important acquisition in a decade.

What Folger has acquired has been described by experts as the most extensive and interesting private collection of Reformation works assembled since the turn of the century.

It had been brought together by a Swiss bibliophile and was offered exclusively to Folger by the firm of Erasmushaus-Haus der Bucher. The firm, which dates back to the 16th century and was in existence when some of the collection's books were being printed, has its offices in the house in which Erasmus once wrote his treatises.

Many of the volumes, illustrated by early 16th-century German masters of the woodblock, also offer artistic riches. Attributions include Hans Holbein, Lucas Cranach and Hans Bol-dung Grien.

In the Martin Luther titles alone, the collection adds 180 new items to Folger's collection of 300 titles and makes the Library's collection perhaps the finest in the United States. One of the prize items is a 1518 expanded version of Luther's 95 theses, printed a year after he nailed them to the wooden door of the church of Wittenberg.

Friends of the Folger Library will have a private viewing of the new acquisitions at their annual meeting tonight at Folger. Before they go on



"Der Prophet Habacuc . . ." by Martin Luther, printed in Augsburg in 1526.

public exhibition, they will have to be catalogued and accessioned into the library's collection.

The purchase price was not made public but came from Folger's capital

funds, a large anonymous gift by one of the Library's friends, and grants from the Crystal Trust of Wilmington, Del., and the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Wally McNamee—Newsweek

Collins, Atkinson: Stormy indictment of a corrupt and dehumanizing society

Poetic Madness

In its three years under Louis Scheeder, now 29, the Folger Theatre Group (started in 1971 by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C.) has won a reputation for youthful audacity and increased its subscribers from 427 to 5,200 in the process. The most audacious of its many premières is the U.S. debut of Edward Bond's *THE FOOL*, a challenging new work by perhaps the most important—and certainly the most controversial—of the younger English playwrights. The American theater owes a debt of gratitude to Scheeder for his courage, brains and talent.

It takes all three to stage the work of Bond. His plays, as one English critic put it, have managed to "get firmly up society's nose" with their political anger and shock tactics, which have included the stoning of a baby to death by young delinquents in "Saved," a lesbian encounter between Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale in "Early Morning," an execution and dismembering in "Narrow Road to the Deep North" and a grisly blinding in Bond's reworking of "Lear." No artist has used violence with such passionate sorrow and fiercely controlled moral indignation. "The Fool" is the least violent of his plays on the surface, but underneath it is his stormiest indictment of the trend of society toward corruption and dehumanization.

Cannons: In "The Fool," Bond examines the life of John Clare, the crystalline peasant-poet who was driven to madness by his lifelong struggle with poverty and his own overwrought sensibility. Clare is caught in the maelstrom of the industrial revolution in 1815, when the iron cannons of Waterloo have led to the iron bridges and trains of a new age. In Clare's rural East Anglia the common lands have been broken up by acts of enclosure, displacing the peasantry and polarizing the new society between rich,

all-powerful landowners and poor, powerless migrant workers. "Six days a week I go to work in the dark and come home in the dark," says one worker. "For what? Ten shillings. Even Judas got 30—but he came from a good family and wouldn't work for less."

The laborers loot the manor of Lord Milton, battling the gun-toting keepers—the first finks of modern society—and stripping naked the sanctimonious parson, whose soft, pampered flesh rouses their wrath. "My baby's born hard," marvels a peasant woman. "Your flesh is stolen goods." Act I takes place in darkness, through which the romantic Clare drinks, fornicates, writes poems, falls in love with Mary, a beautiful servant girl, but marries the stolid Patty.

Reviled: Act II breaks out into light, an ironic light in which we see the young Clare as the literary sensation of a London season, while in the background two prizefighters beat each other bloody for the delectation of the sporting gentry. What would be heavy-handed symbolism with almost any other playwright, Bond—through profound sincerity and a brilliant technical control—makes into stunning theater. Tightly, powerfully, relentlessly, he integrates his themes—the tragically unsuccessful fight for social justice and the tragic growth and fall of a poet's sensibility. Discarded by a frivolous public, reviled by a wife whom poverty and seven children have turned into a harridan, Clare's mind topples. The last scene takes place in the asylum where Clare spent his last 26 years. The poet now speaks only in grunts that must be interpreted by a madwoman.

The scene is shocking, moving and even amusing with a grim tenderness. Bond is the theater's most unsettling multiple personality. Propagandist, poet, rationalist, romantic, pessimist, optimist, he expresses the contradic-

tions that make humanity human and make a good society so difficult to create. All attempts to pin Bond down as a Marxist, socialist, agitprop writer miss the unique complexity of his theatrical effect. "The Fool" vibrates with hate and with love; Bond is fair to both sides of the social struggle despite his enmity for the system of competitive capitalism which has created two sides. "I'm a poet and I teach men how to eat," says Clare. He means that he's both the most visionary and most practical of men—exactly what Bond wants to be.

With more than 40 roles, "The Fool" would strain the resources of the biggest and most seasoned company, and Scheeder's staging of this difficult play is astonishingly good. His actors effectively suggest the East Anglian accent, which Bond used because "it moves in the mouth and forces gestures and forced action." It's hard to fault the gallant intelligence of Paul Collins in the tough role of Clare, and the large cast produces a coherent energy and appealing individuals, among them Linda Atkinson as Patty, Terry Hinz as her brother, the chief rebel, Anne Stone as Mary, and Frederic Warriner and Albert Corbin as Lord Milton and the parson, men who are trapped in their own privilege. A bright young company outside New York, attacking a complex but rewarding new play by a major writer—this is the best kind of theatrical news.

—JACK KROLL

Shakespeare in Washington

The New Republic JUNE 5, 1976

It is momentarily intriguing to think that, had he wanted to, Shakespeare could have visited the New World. Certainly he read about it (the Virginia colonies; the "still-vexed Bermoothes") with interest sufficient to prompt recent critics to see in *The Tempest* an early analysis of colonial attitudes. And then there is the nicely coincidental Harvard connection. John Harvard, early benefactor of the college named for him, was descended from a Stratford family with connections to Shakespeare's own. But there was no Shakespeare in the library he willed the college in 1638. Early New England was necessarily an infertile ground for Shakespeare, as Charles H. Shattuck shows in his *Shakespeare on the American Stage*. The Puritan attacks on the English stage carried over to the colonies and pretty well restricted the playing of Shakespeare and other playwrights to the friendlier confines of Williamsburg (where young George Washington was an avid spectator) and points south. Perhaps the only 17th-century New Englander who could have appreciated *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or *Twelfth Night* was that Stephano/Sir Toby of Merry Mount, Thomas Morton. But Morton was outmanned and outgunned by the redoubtable Standish, and his absurd fate, which has provided later New England writers Nathaniel Hawthorne and Robert Lowell with food for allegory, could also be seen as an allegory of the American rejection of significant aspects of English culture, including the Shakespearean milieu.

Nevertheless, Shakespeare did penetrate America, as he seems to have penetrated the world. It was to celebrate and ponder this phenomenon that the International Shakespeare Association Congress, gracefully and efficiently hosted by the SAA and the Folger Shakespeare Library, convened at the Statler Hilton in Washington, DC the week of April 19-25.

The Congress (entitled *Shakespeare in America*) was, of course, a Bicentennial event. This meant a fair deal of superfluous ceremony, self-congratulatory rhetoric, Anglo-American backslapping, and a commemorative medal that has on one side a fine Shakespeare and on the other a cigar store patriot so enraptured by his

flag that he seems not to notice the abyss that gapes at his feet. But the Bicentennial dimension had advantages; it certainly helped draw a varied repertory of speakers from outside the realm of Shakespeare professionals. These were admittedly uneven; Alistair Cooke had interesting and amusing things to say about Shakespeare in early American popular culture, but when he gazed finally into the essence of the man he found only—himself. Anthony Burgess began incomprehensibly, middled tediously, but ended with a compelling comic fable about Shakespeare's late middle age. And, of course, there was Borges. One had seen him earlier in the week—blind, ethereal, dignified, being managed tenderly by a much larger, much stronger man: Oedipus at the coffee shop. His talk was the most ostentatiously public event of the Congress. An overflow crowd buzzed excitedly in the glare of the TV lights, and after a tantalizing delay Señor Borges entered to deliver—in a voice as feathery as angel wings—an elaborate web of speculation on "The Riddle of Shakespeare," revealing at the end a primal likeness between God as creator and Shakespeare as creator, and the inexhaustible but impossible effort to give both a local habitation, a name, a real and palpable presence.

Such momentous events capped the delegates' working days, mornings having been spent in the traditional arenas of the scholarly congress—panel, paper session, seminar. The real work was done here, but as the benefits were personal to each delegate I will only note that the whole panoply of Shakespearean investigation was on display and that the senior people tended toward general topics to which their broad liberal humanist principles could be fruitfully applied, whereas the young ones were deep in the texts, rethinking everything and organizing their insights around such terms as *myth, rhetoric, structure, psychology, performance*. It was a situation alive with generational ironies: a 30ish American informed the distinguished L.C. Knights that he had quoted him several times in a book: "To cut me up!" crowed Knights, looking unaccountably pleased.

Given the year and the city, political concerns were inevitable. Shakespeare was, after all, the man who gave us that

packaged politician, Richard . . . of Gloucester ("Look you, get a prayer book in your hand/And stand betwixt two churchmen"). Joel Hurstfield mentioned Watergate specifically, and no one missed the connection between that final, belated trauma of the late '60s, the quietistic mood of the '70s, and his presentation of Shakespeare's political milieu as one fatigued by popular and millenarian rebellion, finding welcome refuge in simple tolerance and small adjustments. The "Remarks on Shakespeare" by Elliot Richardson "a St. Albans parent" at Washington Cathedral did not stray from this tone. Richardson fumbled for a second with Canon Martin's seeming attempt to convert Shakespeare into the track coach of Avon, but gave his audience a modest amateur's excursion through his personal encounters with the plays. The few shy references to the Saturday Night Massacre were couched in the "low-key British style humor" already noted in this magazine, and the whole event—magisterial setting included—was a suave Eastern establishment performance (I reject out of hand a cynic's notion that there is a Shakespeare Affairs staffer at Commerce).

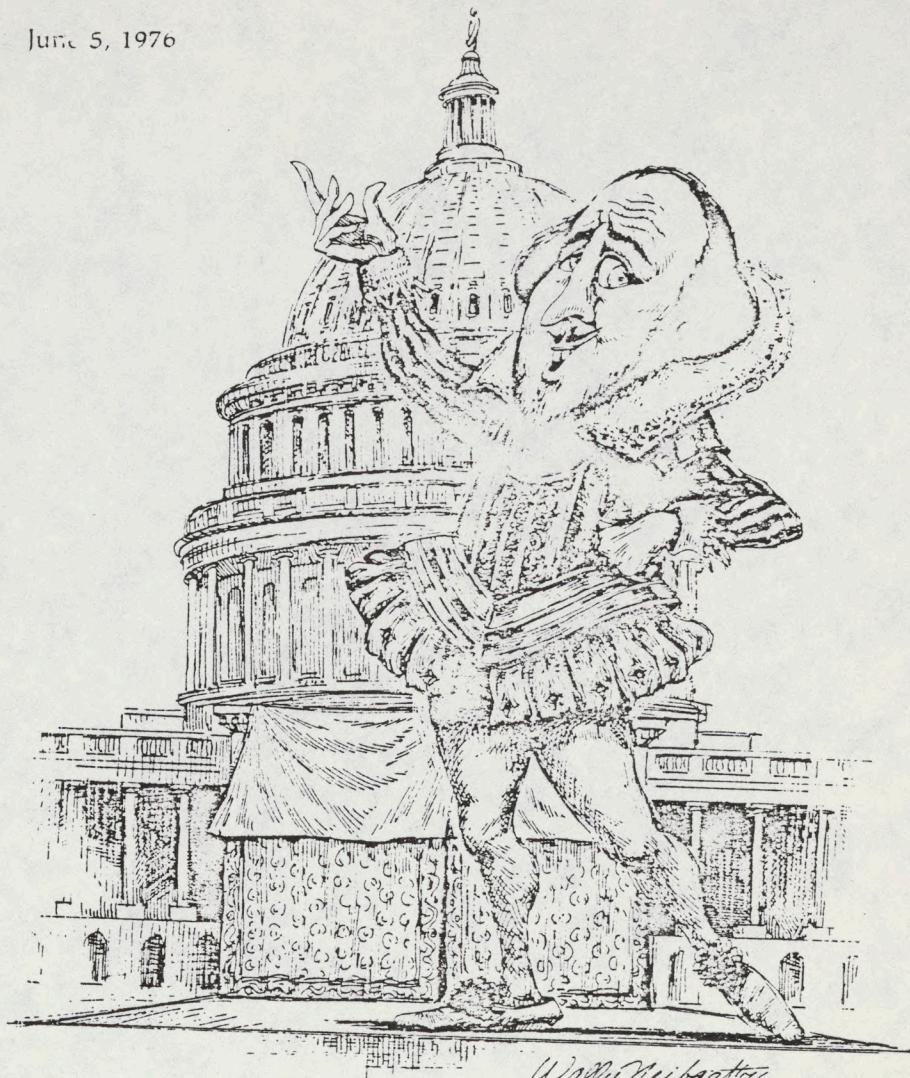
But there were other, very different voices: the finely honed dialectic of Robert Weimann, whose lively "Marxist Approaches to Shakespeare" seminar sustained a vigorous theoretical argument well outside the limits of time and place allotted to it; Eldred Jones, who told graphically of the energizing but deadly serious effects of producing Shakespeare in the explosive world of contemporary African politics; Stephen J. Brown, whose paper "The Uses of Shakespeare in America: A Study in Class Domination" was an intricate, ironic, scrupulously documented meditation on the education theory promulgated by the Anglo-American cultural leadership in the early 20th-century. Brown's final call was for the loving, tactile, Whitmanian Shakespeare that lies behind the spokesman for English gentility our forefathers saw and promoted. His call had at least one response before it was issued: Joseph Papp (hearing the immigrant beat of lower Brooklyn) did his iconoclastic tap dance across British speech and "traditional" Shakespeare, ending with his own call for a multiracial, many-accented national theater for Shakespeare and other classics.

Charles Shattuck's welcome *Shakespeare on the American Stage: From the Hallams to Edwin Booth* (published in conjunction with Congress by the

June 5, 1976

The New Republic
June 5, 1976

"Shakespeare in
Washington"



Folger Shakespeare Library) shows that the American response to theater has always been turbulent. David Douglass and his company were forced in 1761 to present *Othello* not as a play but as a series of "Moral Dialogues" with each character neatly tagged. Thus, Othello: "Of jealousy, our being's bane/Mark the small cause, and the most dreadful pain." But a more serious problem was created by the long dominance of British actors in America. A "better sort" of theatergoer was always available to welcome an actor such as Charles Kemble, "the express image of the English gentleman of the past generation." But there were other forces at work, the kind represented by the Tribune critic who "pitched into Shakespeare for always telling lies about The Working-Man" and for never showing "one ray of genius or polish except in courtly Hamlets and gallant Petruchios." These extremes clashed with the rise of the fiery nationalist Edwin Forrest, America's first native-born actor of genius. The rivalry that developed between Forrest and British

actor Charles Macready provoked jingoistic passions that resulted finally in the astonishing Astor Place Riot, into which the military was called. Thirty-one people were killed in the resulting gunfire. This moment, which Shattuck prepares for carefully, forms the narrative center of the book, and the tensions revealed are still present, in less violent ways, in contemporary debates over radical styles of theatrical production and the social uses of Shakespeare.

But it will not do to force Shattuck into this or any other thesis. He is a deliberately unassuming writer who keeps himself scrupulously concealed behind his lucid, detailed account of the remarkable men and women who took the stage in early America. Indeed, much of the considerable pleasure of this book comes at this elemental level: delight in a Fanny Kemble who played stage parts in America and also penetrated to the heart of American life, anatomizing it brilliantly in letters and journals; or pity and amazement at the "mad tragedian" Junius Brutus Booth, the man who fathered the Booth brothers and who in his derangement rebelled against the

fate of his character (Richard III) and duelled the Earl of Richmond off the stage and into the street. Special mention should be made of the illustrations. Beautifully chosen and presented, they provide that crucial element of spectacle necessary to any theatrical experience.

I wish, in ending, to bring back Señor Borges and his riddle of Shakespeare. For a whole week all of us were living demonstrations of the power of that riddle; we were the un-riddlers, defying the injunction that riddles are not to be solved, failing to solve, yet finding exhilaration in the attempt and the continued hope to solve. We may not, as Borges said, know any more about Shakespeare than we do about God, but neither do we know any less. And despite the, perhaps, different scope of the inquiries, the impulse to understand creators and their works remains a sustaining, engaging activity.

Roger Stilling

Roger Stilling is author of the forthcoming *Love and Death in Renaissance Tragedy* (LSU Press).

As springtime fancies turn to bicentennial year . . .

Henry V imitates the actions of contemporary Washington

From Patrick Brogan
Washington, March 22

The snow has stopped, the cherry blossoms are out, and Washington is beginning to celebrate the Bicentennial in earnest.

The National Gallery has put on its first Bicentennial exhibition, on Europe's decidedly curious view of America in the earlier centuries of its discovery; the first section of the capital's underground railway opens on Wednesday; and the Folger Theatre has put on *Henry V*.

The whole 98-mile subway system was due to be ready by July 4: Washingtonians will be lucky if it is ready by 1976. *Henry V* opened on time, however; the Folger is one of the world's most idiosyncratic theatres, an almost exact reproduction of the Globe, attached to one of the world's largest

collections of Shakespeariana.

Playgoers, therefore, can see the show much as its first audience did, although the building is square, not round, and the roof is covered. *Henry V*, with its themes of the duties of kingship and the subservience of subjects to their monarch, is an apt play for contemporary Washington.

Mr Richard Nixon remarked the other day that a "sovereign" was permitted to do things which ordinary citizens were not, and King Henry would doubtless have agreed. They both believed that government is a mystery about which lesser mortals ought not to worry themselves.

The show produced by Louis Scheeder and with Richard Kline in the title role, is the most successful Shakespearian production the Folger has put on in recent years. The group

is one of several in Washington trying to bring a proper theatrical life to the city, to match the musical success and continuity of the National Symphony Orchestra.

The theatrical scene here, in one of the best-educated cities in the world, is surprisingly barren. But Washington is lucky to have a theatre as good as the Folger and actors as good as Mr Kline and his colleagues, notably David Cromwell, who played Pistol, and Kathleen Ireton, who played Mistress Quickly.

Meanwhile, more grandiose celebrations are in the making, including a Scottish tattoo and fireworks around the Washington Memorial. No one has a firm idea of how many visitors will come here this year, but estimates range as high as 20 million. In any event, it will be a crowded summer.

The Washington Star

Tuesday, December 2, 1975

A Few Words of Disrespect For Today's Poets, Novelists

By Deborah Papier

Special to the Washington Star

"I think there are some good poets around," said novelist and poet John Gardner in the press conference that preceded his reading at the Folger Library last night. "I just can't think of any offhand."

Gardner, the author of "Sunlight Dialogues," "Jason and Medeia," "Grendel" and several other works of fiction and criticism, is equally critical of modern novelists.

"In practically every modern novel there's a description of someone going to the bathroom. That's misspent energy. Everything that you read today has this kind of intimacy. You're buried in this subjective consciousness, and it's terribly offensive to me."

So fastidious an opinion seemed a bit incongruous coming from Gardner. Dressed as he was yesterday in leather vest and boots, he looked very much the trendy academician. But Gardner's academic specialty is medieval literature, and he holds some very archaic views on art and literature.

"Art has to be positive," he declared. Gardner rejects the emphasis on the individual that permeates modern art, preferring instead the "transcendent ideals" of classic art.

As a 20th century novelist who admires older art forms, Gardner finds himself "playing games with literary forms." He spoke yesterday of writing an "imitation epic," of a "mock high style," even of writing an "imitation modern novel." Gardner's fondness for the past also emerged in his discussion of criticism.

"In a sense," he said, "criticism is more impor-

tant than fiction. The novelist just explains contemporary people to their contemporaries, but the critic helps people read and understand the works of the past."

"Criticism doesn't really take great sensitivity, though — just a sort of high-minded drudgery. You can have a bad case of pneumonia and still write criticism."

His own work, though, has never been criticized — just reviewed.

Right now, Gardner says, he is working on a Bicentennial novel.

"Everybody is writing Bicentennial novels, so I decided to do a serious one."

Perhaps this novel is Gardner's tribute to democracy. For despite his ruthless criticisms of contemporary culture, he does have a few kind words for that institution.

"I hate modern movies and I hate TV and I hate all that crap," says Gardner. "But that's all part of democracy — people doing what they want to do. And I kind of like that."

Thursday, Dec. 19, 1974

Shakespeare Comes to Sharpe Health School

By Lee A. Daniels

Washington Post Staff Writer

"I was having trouble with some of the language in 'As You Like It,'" said Sylvester Fields, 15. "But I think I understand the story better now. They helped make what our teachers told us clearer."

Sylvester's words summed up the general feeling yesterday at the Sharpe Health School, after a visit from several staff members of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Two actors from the library's troupe read excerpts from "Henry IV" and "As You Like It," answered questions about the plays' meaning and language and involved the students in skits during an hour-long session in the school's auditorium.

The Sharpe school at 4300 13th St. NW is a public school for physically handicapped children from pre-kindergarten through high school. Its current enrollment is about 230 students.

"Many of our students would find it difficult getting to the Folger," said Irva Savoy, who teaches Shakespeare and French. The library presents special performances of Shakespeare's plays, which public school students can attend free.

"This way they can see for actually performing the plays," she said, "they can hear the language spoken as it should be, and they can ask the actors' questions."

The 70 students, who were from grades seven through nine, and the two actors, Don Moore and Clement Fowler, discussed each of

the four excerpts read, defining what certain words like "capon" and "pantaloons" meant and how certain phrases should be said.

"They showed us how to do certain parts," said Otis Boone, 15, after the performance. "I didn't know quite how to do it before."

It was obvious the students enjoyed performing in the skits. When Moore said he would need seven students to act out a famous Shakespearian passage, the auditorium erupted into a sea of hands and shouts of "Me, me!"

"All the world's a stage," Moore intoned when the seven were lined up beside him. As he continued, the students acted out each of the seven stages of life described in the passage to the applause and laughter of the audience.

The three-year-old Folger effort to develop methods and materials for teaching Shakespeare in urban public schools has reached more than 4,000 students, library officials said, and involved more than 50 teachers in special year-long seminars, library officials said. The program is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities.



By Douglas Chevalier—The Washington Post
Sharpe Health School seventh-grader Greg Donaldson has makeup applied by Donald Moore of Folger Library.

The New York Times

250 Note Anniversary of Petrarch's Death

By LINDA CHARLTON
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 12—A group of 250 men and women ended today a week-long consideration of the life, times, loves, language, philosophy and style of one Francesco Petrarca—probably best known to nonspecialists as Petrarch, Italian poet, the one who perfected a sonnet form and celebrated the joys of unrequited love.

That the International Petrarch Congress ended on Good Friday is no coincidence. It has a planned symbolic importance that Petrarch would have savored, for it was on a Good Friday in 1327, he wrote, that he first saw Laura, for whose love he was to suffer for 21 years until her death.

This month of April is the 600th anniversary of Petrarch's death. It was with this date in mind that planning for the conference, held at the Folger Shakespeare Library, began about five years ago. The money for the congress, some \$120,000, came from the National Endowment for the Humanities; Verrazano College in Saratoga, N.Y., and Edward J. Piszek, a Philadelphia frozen-fish magnate who is an enthusiast of the arts. Mr. Piszek was awarded a gold Petrarch medal today in appreciation.

The conference opened last Saturday, April 6—another charming noncoincidence, since Petrarch also says that it was on an April 6 that he first saw Laura in a church in Evignon—and has included lectures on every facet of this multifaceted man, from Petrarch and the Roman antiquities to Petrarch and Renaissance music and Petrarch and Christian philosophy.

There have also been special concerts, a scholar's mass, a day at the National Gallery of Art to examine art of his period and a reading, in translation, of



The New York Times
Gowned and hooded scholars and others at the week's closing ceremony at the Folger.

excerpts from Petrarch's "Coronation Oration," by Senator John Pastore, on the steps of the West Side of the Capitol.

The period splendor of this event, which began with an

academic procession from the Folger, a few blocks away, was dulled slightly by the drizzle that induced some splendidly gowned and hooded scholars to conceal small umbrellas in the folds

of their robes. The few hardy tourists who doggedly pursued their schedules seemed unfazed by the trial of scarlet and purple and cerise that swept through the grounds.

Senator Pastore, a Rhode Island Democrat of Italian background, was huddled in a raincoat, with only a flash of his red-and-green tie visible as he read Petrarch's description of the reasons he had had himself crowned with laurel on Rome's Capitoline Hill in 1341. One reason, the poet admitted with candor, was a desire for immortality in what was then a new sense of the word—not the immortality promised by religion, but that of this world, for "many mighty men and others have passed into oblivion."

This new awareness of the physical world is one factor that makes Petrarch fascinating to scholars, beyond even his lyrical love poetry, according to Father Francis X. Murphy, who delivered the Congress's lecture on Petrarch and Christian philosophy. Not yet a "renaissance man," said Father Murphy, whose own wide range of knowledge might put him in the running for this title, Petrarch was, rather, "a medieval man at the edge of the precipice."

"He makes it possible for the renaissance man," Father Murphy said.

Pastore Reads Petrarch

Born in 1304, dead in 1374, Petrarch was a bridge between the ordered universe of the medieval world and the adventurous uncertainties of the Renaissance. He displayed, in his life, some of the versatility that is associated with men who lived considerably later.

He was a poet and a prose writer in both Italian and Latin; he took minor orders in the church; he was the first alpinist in the modern sense, since he climbed the Alps for their own sake and not, as Hannibal and others, to get somewhere else. He served as an ambassador for the Colonna family and for the Pope; he studied law but enjoyed student life too hugely to bother with a degree. He loved Laura beyond death but he fathered two illegitimate children.



Participants in the International Petrarch Congress marching from the Capitol to the Folger Shakespeare Library

Matters of faith were of great importance to him, but Father Murphy said, "This world is what he sees and where he laughs and cries." It was also where he inveighed against doctors and blandly sidestepped competition with his near-contemporary, Dante. "Dante," said Father Murphy, who is teaching a course on political theory from Dante to Machiavelli this year at Johns Hopkins University, "lived still within a closed universe. Petrarch was trying to break out of the circular, closed world where everything is known."

Student of the Classics

More than anything else, however, it was his penchant for self-examination that diminishes the 600 years between Petrarch and now. "He was interested in things that his contemporaries didn't grasp," said Father Murphy, "particularly self-introspection—he knows how

to get after himself interiorly." Or, as Petrarch himself put it in a letter to a friend, "I turned my inward eye upon myself . . ."

Just to fill in the corners, Petrarch was also an ardent classicist who among other things made an internal historical study of some Livy manuscripts and was convinced that Cicero, his favorite philosopher, was really a monotheist at heart. Not a particularly modest man, he regarded his own works as the equal of the greatest of the past, he even compared his own love for Laura with Christ's love for mankind.

Erudite, curious, arrogant, fascinated by his inner world and by the world around him, a genius who was not above self-advertisement: "Petrarch," said Father Murphy at the end of his lecture, might not have been fully at home in our contemporary world, but at least he would have understood the problems of the spirit troubling modern man."

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1973

Folger's Lost and Found: A Rare Book Buyer



By Jean M. White

One of Elizabeth Niemyer's choice finds this year is a little, tattered book that looks as if it should be fumigated before being tossed in the trash can. She paid \$150 for it—a big bargain.

"There it is, still in its tatty little cover," Miss Niemyer was saying fondly the other day. "The bookseller was interested in handsome hunting and sport books and hadn't taken time to look it over. I bought it on hunch and put it in the car."

Behind the dignified and prepossessing title of acquisitions librarian at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Liz Niemyer is really a detective and tracer of rare and lost books.

What she uncovered beneath the battered covers of the \$150 find was a 17th-century "poor man's book"—a collection of eight cheaply printed chapbooks hawked at fairs and markets by itinerant peddlers. What's more, five of the eight chapbooks, or cheap pamphlets, appear to have been unrecorded until Miss Niemyer's discovery at a New York book-dealer.

The chapbooks were read by the mass audience of the 17th century and so were largely disdained by libraries. Very few have survived into today. If it's any index of the popular reading of the day, here is the title of one tract: "The Charitable Christian: The Soul's Preparation for the Day of Death."

Liz Niemyer makes the search for rare books as exciting as a chase with the thrill of discovery at the end:

"It's really fun running into something like this. It gets exciting when you think about it. Take the devotional book signed by the mother of Henry VIII. . . . the mother of Henry VIII and the grandmother of Elizabeth I."

That book, printed in 1498 in Paris, is the earliest-dated book acquired this year on Liz Niemyer's book-buying jaunts. One leaf bears the inscription: "Madame, pray you Remember me in yowr good prayers yowr mastras Elysabeth R." The handwriting is that of Elizabeth of York, whose marriage to Henry VII

See FOLGER, B14, Col. 1

"It gets exciting when you think about it. Take the devotional book signed by the mother of Henry VIII . . . the mother of Henry VIII and the grandmother of Elizabeth I."

Folger's Book Sleuth'

FOLGER, From B1

in 1486 ended the rivalry between the houses of York and Lancaster and the War of Roses.

Miss Niemyer is now on a swing through Ireland, Switzerland and the Netherlands to test the "book climate," as she describes it. Prices have soared 20 per cent in the last year as the public has begun to buy books as an inflation hedge.

"You just can't check book catalogs," she says about her job. "You have to find out by osmosis, talk to the booksellers, go to the specialists in small villages. Booksellers are one of the few independent breeds left today."

The Folger Shakespeare Library, with more than 200,000 books and 40,000 manuscripts, has one of the world's finest collections of rare books and manuscripts relating to the Renaissance. The collection keeps growing under an aggressive book-buying program.

Legends have grown up around the exploits of the late Eleanor (Molly) Pitcher, who was Miss Niemyer's predecessor. Tales are told about her trading off a roof re-thatching job to latch on to a superb, well-preserved library in an old village church in England.

"I don't know about that," smiles Miss Niemyer. "But I was on a trip with her in Ireland in the early 1960s. It was a real thrill. There in an Irish cathedral, we stumbled on shelf after shelf of books—a mid-18th-century library just about untouched by human hands.

"It wasn't quite as dramatic as repairing a hole in the roof. We settled on an auction, we got good value, and the money went to restore the cathedral."

The delight of the Folger finds is that beyond the "heavy" volumes of historical or intellectual significance, are lively books that reflect everyday life: cookbooks, books on gardening, predicting weather, astrology, breeds of dogs, travel books, tales of explorations that served as the science fiction of the day.

If verses are any indication, the weather forecasters of the 16th century didn't do much better than the Washington TV weathermen of today. Here is one method from a small booklet, "Perpetual and Natural Prognostications of the Change of Weather, 1598":

*"If oxen do lick themselves against the haire,
It is a token of raine to follow shortly after."*

One of Liz Niemyer's favorite purchases this year has been a kind of pop-up book on anatomy. It bears an awesome title: *Captatum Microcosmicum*. Inside there are delightful illustrations, and, much like a surgeon, the reader can peel off layer after layer (starting with the fig leaf), showing the muscles, skeleton, and internal organs as they would occur in a dissection from the skin inward. It was published in 1660 in Frankfurt.

Another surprise bargain this year for Folger came when Miss Niemyer came up with a broadside leaf of 1603 to banish "incorrigible or dangerous Rogues" to certain foreign parts, including "The new-found Land, the East, and West Indies."

"The evidence seemed to point to its being part of something else," the librarian recalls. "So we investigated."

Folger was able to convince the bookdealer that

his item was actually a second leaf to a James I Proclamation of which Folger already had another incomplete part.

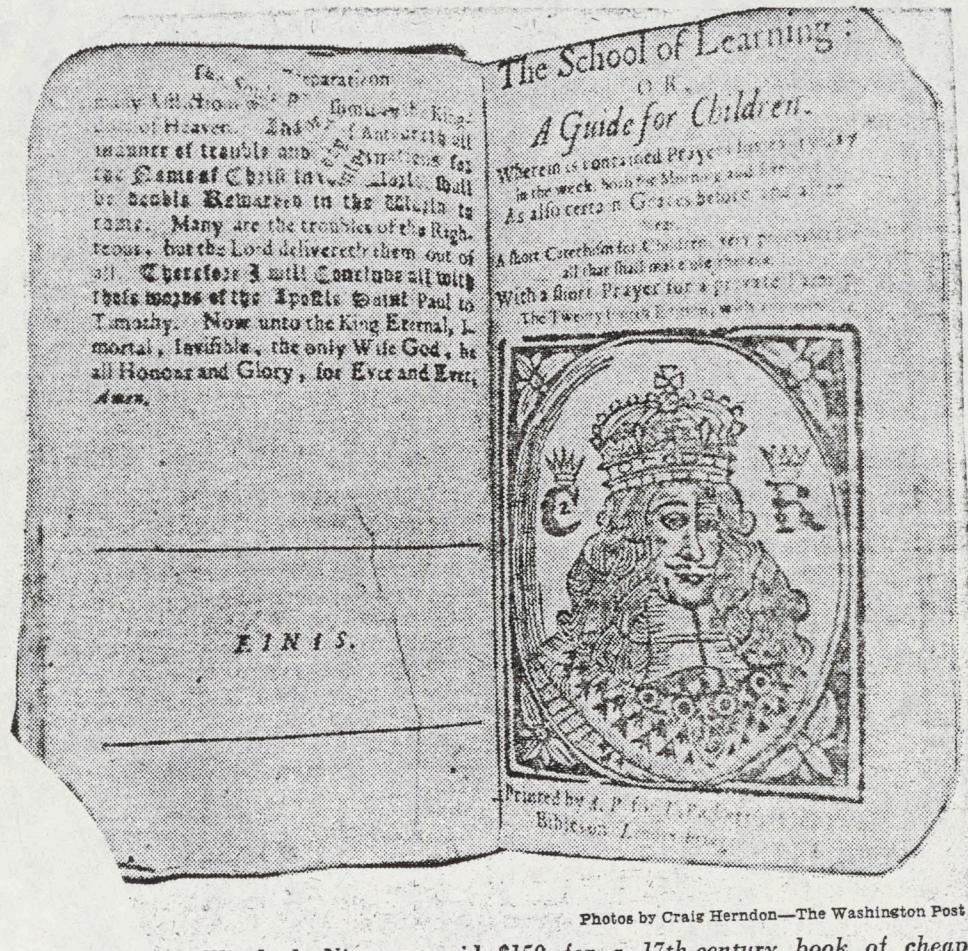
"We got a good reduction in the \$1,000 price," Miss Niemyer points out with a smile.

And it wasn't until she got the purchase back to the Folger and placed the leaves side by side that a final discovery was made: The two bore in the lower left margins—in the same hand—the pencil numberings 42 and 43.

"They must have been together in the same collection at sometime," Miss Niemyer deduces. "Now they are together after more than 50 years. The first leaf had been purchased at least a half-century ago by Mr. Folger before the library even existed."

Another unusual recent purchase was a small costume notebook of Fanny Kemble, the celebrated actress. It dates from the 1830s. In Miss Kemble's own hand on the right pages is the name of the role and the play. Laid in loose are colored, waist-length costume sketches, possibly done by the actress herself. The sketches are on oval sheets of clear mica (in days before clear plastic) and the face is left blank.

To help provide funds for its rare book purchases, Folger is going to stage an Elizabethan feast on Nov. 12. The committee will get a preview tonight, both in dress and food. Expected to be present and don Elizabethan attire are British Ambassador and the Countess of Cromer, HEW Secretary and Mrs. Caspar Weinberger, and Federal Reserve Chairman and Mrs. Arthur Burns.



ENTERTAINMENT/THE ARTS



An Old Tale Retold

By Angela Terrell

An impish "Puck" pranced across the Folger Shakespeare Library stage Thursday night gesturing to the audience and silently telling the tale of "A Midsummer's Night Dream" in dance.

Jon Jackson, a student from McKinley High School and a member of the semi-professional black theater group, Ebony Impromptu, was Puck for a night of Shakespeare as interpreted by D.C. public high school students in an experimental program between the Folger and the schools.

The program, "Shakespeare and the Arts in the Classroom," was devised to develop methods and materials to make teaching Shakespeare more relevant to inner-city students. The 1-year-old program was funded by the National Home Library Foundation with help from the D.C. Commission on the Arts.

Thursday night's program also included a chamber choir from Wilson High School and a brass ensemble from McKinley High School, performing 16th-century Renaissance music.

A measure of the success

of this educational program could be seen in the interpretation of an excerpt from "A Winter's Tale." It was more than the usual memorization of Shakespeare's lines.

Coolidge High School students gave three versions: the original text, a German translation and a "jive" or street-language version. This last, written and performed by students Kevin Larry and Michael Jones, showed especially how the students have been able to translate Shakespeare and find out for themselves what it means.

By James K. W. Atherton—The Washington Post

Jon Jackson recreates Shakespeare's character Puck from "A Midsummer Night's Dream," in an experimental program to make the Bard's poetry more available to inner-city students.

The New York Times

Gift to Folger May Provide Clues About Shakespeare

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 22—Just in time for the playwright's 409th birthday, the Folger Shakespeare Library has been given a homemade, handwritten personal diary that records the earliest known purchase of a work done by William Shakespeare.

Three lines on a yellowed page dated June 17, 1593, show that one Richard Stonley, an elderly teller of the Queen's Exchequer, stopped by a London bookstall that day and picked up a copy of "Venus and Adonis," the erotic narrative poem that was Shakespeare's first published work.

"It's one of the most important Shakespeare finds of the last decade," said O. B. Hardison Jr., director of the Folger, from behind a cloud of pipe smoke. In its dark-panelled 16th-century rooms, the library houses a world-famous collection of rare books and manuscripts from the Renaissance, including a 1623 first-folio edition of Shakespeare's plays.

4 Patrons Donate Diaries

Mr. Stonley's diary for 1593, along with two for 1581 and 1596, will be donated to the Folger tomor-

row, which is Shakespeare's birthday and the 41st anniversary of the library. The diaries are the gift of four unidentified patrons who paid an undisclosed sum.

Mr. Stonley's judgment in reading matter apparently was more sound than his judgment in business speculations. He wound up in the Fleet, a former debtors prison in London. A gentleman, fond of catching good books as soon as they came out, he itemized each day's expenditures in his diaries, lacking the entries with quotations from Cato and the Bible.

The vellum-bound volumes were found at the San Francisco Book Fair last September by Elizabeth Niemyer, a curator of the library. She said she did not know what they contained, but thought they looked promising enough to bring back on approval.

The curator called in Laeticia Yeandle, the staff's expert on Renaissance handwriting, to look at the diaries, which were written and indexed in an ornate hand. After a couple of hours, Mrs. Yeandle saw the entry:

*Books For the survey of
France with the
Venus & Adonis
by Shakespeare*

12 pence

Dr. James G. McManaway,

editor of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, former director and now consultant to the Folger, called the mind "unique and sensational" because "practically nothing is known about Shakespeare between 1585 and 1594." The Folger staff believes the diary will help determine the publication date of "Venus and Adonis."

The poem, which is about the love affair between the legendary god and goddess, is known to have been highly popular in its day, going through at least 18 printings. Only one first-edition copy is known to exist, at Oxford.

On the day he picked up the book, Mr. Stonley also records paying 10 shillings for "vittell," 12 pence for "three dozen of scottish buttons" and three shillings for "two yards and 1/2 of serge for two pair of canions."

Wondering what serge canions were, Mrs. Yeandle consulted her Oxford English Dictionary, which said they were "ornamental rolls laid like sausages around the legs of britches."

The diaries and the Folger's 1596 edition of "Venus and Adonis" will be on display through May.



By Larry Morris—The Washington Post

Mr. and Mrs. Sam Ervin (D-N.C.) talk with British Ambassador Cromer, right, at Sunday's birthday party for the Folger Shakespeare Library.

WASHINGTON, D.C. —
APRIL 24, 1972

"The British ambassador to the U.S., The Earl of Cromer, set the tone for the quiet afternoon fete, calling the Library 'something akin to a shrine' for the English people and a 'symbol of a shared past.'"

Something Akin To a Shrine

By John Carmody

The Folger Shakespeare Library celebrated its birthday yesterday. Like anybody who's just turned 40, it sensibly kept the celebration low-key and confined to just a few old friends.

Not that the party didn't have its moments. Sidney Marland, Jr., the U.S. Commissioner for Education, riveted the 100 or so guests with a dramatic rendition of a 45-line "rime" he'd composed for the occasion. Eight of the lines belonged to the Bard himself, which kind of kept things from getting out of hand.

The British Ambassador to the U.S., The Earl of Cromer, set the more usual tone for the quiet afternoon fete, calling the Library "something akin to a shrine" for English people and a "symbol of a shared past." Lord Cromer should know because his wife's uncle, Sir Lester Harmsworth, was a noted collector whose acquisitions have belonged to the Folger since 1938.

(Yesterday was actually a double celebration, since Will Shakespeare was marking his 408th anniversary, too).

Mayor Walter Washington, armed with a proclamation, arrived late from the groundbreaking of a Catholic church to express wonder that he'd just heard "Amazing Grace" sung at the earlier ceremony. "Why, that's an old Baptist hymn," said the Mayor, who praised the Folger for "never having turned its back on anyone, regardless of their affluence or position."

John Slocum, chairman of the 2-year-old "Friends of the Folger Library," followed Sidney Marland complaining that his was "a tough act to follow." Slocum topped it, though, by reading a letter from Pres-

ident Nixon who said he was joined "by countless fellow citizens who love literature and the arts in expressing appreciation for the leadership and enrichment this great American institution has provided."

Mrs. Donald Hyde, who is president of the Shakespeare Association of America, traced the history of American scholarly interest in the genius from Stratford-on-Avon from the time of Ralph Waldo Emerson to the present.

This was her round-about way of announcing one of the two big birthdays: presents the Library received yesterday — the news that the Shakespearean Quarterly, the scholar's own Yellow Pages in that field, is about to receive a permanent home at the Folger.

The other present was the official proclamation that the Library has been placed in the National Register of Historic Places. This prompted Library director Dr. O. B. Hardison, Jr. to take his moment with the Bard — "Some men are born great, some achieve greatness and some men have greatness thrust upon them."

After the ceremony, which was held in the Elizabethan-style theater, the guests repaired to The Founder's Room, where they chatted over sherry and cucumber sandwiches.

And on the way they could hear Sen. Sam Ervin (D-N.C.), no mean Shakespeare buff himself, launch into Polonius' advice to Laertes, *vis a vis* the war in Vietnam.

"Beware of entrance to a quarrel," the Senator said, "but being in, bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee."

That's not bad talk for a birthday party — even if you've just turned 40.

The New York Times

Folger Library Marks Its 40th Year

By NAN ROBERTSON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 23 — "I did think of placing the Shakespeare Library at Stratford, near the bones of the great man himself, but I finally concluded I would give it to Washington; for I am an American."

Today, the Folger Shakespeare Library is simultaneously celebrating Henry Folger's patriotism, its own 40th birthday and the 408th anniversary of William Shakespeare's birth.

Anniversary events in the library's Tudor Temple on Capitol Hill include performances of "Romeo and Juliet" by the lively young resident theatrical troupe; lectures, panel discussions, sherry-sipping and an exhibition that gives a peek at the fabled riches of the Folger collection.

Folger, the secretive first president of Standard Oil of New York, did not live to see his 75,000-volume hoard brought together and used in one place. The library, dedicated on Shakespeare's 368th birthday, April 23, 1952, has now grown to 200,000 books and 40,000 manuscripts.

The collection's value, placed at \$4-million 40 years ago, plus \$6-million for the land and the building, is incalculable in 1972.

The library possesses 79 of the 240 First Folios known to exist; the British Museum, with the next greatest number, has five.

Folger also owns a total of nearly 200 Folios, as well as the greatest collection in the world of books containing allusions to Shakespeare or source

material he might have used.

The Folger collection of books printed in England or English before 1641 is second only to that of the British Museum. The library has become one of the supreme repositories of historical and literary documents of the Tudor and Stuart periods, ranging from the introduction of printing in England in 1476 to the death of Queen Anne in 1714.

Tools For Scholars'

Although grounded in the English Renaissance, the collection also reaches forward to productions of the 19th-century theater. It includes works of science, theology, politics, diaries, costumes, Elizabethan instruments, maps, heraldic records, deeds, paintings, engravings and maps that illuminate Shakespeare's time.

Folger's "kit of tools for scholars" is housed in stacks around the splendid Jacobean reading room, all stained-glass and timbers, with the ashes of the founder and his wife behind a plaque at one end under a bust of Shakespeare. Five hundred scholars used the room's resources in 1971.

The Folger passion for Shakespeare began during his student days at Amherst College, which administers the library under the terms of his will, and continued until his death in 1930, two weeks after the laying of the building's cornerstone.

In the late 1880's, he and his wife Emily Jordan Folger, acquired their first collector's item — a copy of the Fourth Folio of 1685, bought at auction in New York on 30 days' credit for \$107.50.

The couple, who had no chil-

dren, spent their spare time and increasing fortune on building the great collection. As their purchases arrived at their New York apartment, they were examined by both, recorded by Mrs. Folger on cards, then packed away in cases in warehouses along the East Coast. There they remained, inaccessible to everyone, including the owners.

Assailed as Miser

Folger's long-range plan to convert the collection into a research library was known only to his wife until 1928, and he was excoriated by scholars, his future beneficiaries, as a "miser of books." On Jan. 19, 1928, he wrote the Librarian of Congress, Herbert Putnam.

"I know I can tell you in confidence," he said, "that I have been able to collect a library of Shakespeareana finer than anything that has ever been acquired . . . The plan I am perfecting includes an adequate and proper building."

The books and the building, Folger wrote, he wished to give to the capital city and the nation.

Putnam, beside himself with excitement, sent Folger an answering telegram and a letter in which he said the offer opened "a prospect more thrilling" for the cultural interests of the country than anything that had happened in Washington since the establishment of the Freer Gallery.

Mrs. Folger lived until 1936, four years after the Folger Library's completion. By the late 1960's, roughly 25,000 tourists a year were passing through the Folger exhibition gallery and Elizabethan theater.

In 1970, inspired by the Folger's dynamic new director, O. B. Hardison Jr., the Folger Theater Group was formed and began giving regular productions, transforming the periodpiece house into a spirited showcase for the performing arts.